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ASIATIC SCOIETY OF BOMBAY
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in

Koordistan

by

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REMINISCENCES

OF A THREE YEARS'

RESIDENCE IN PERSIA.

CHAPTER I.

FUTTEE ALI SHAH.

THE late King of Persia is most gracefully introduced on the canvass of history by Mr. Morier, in his "Zhorab." I will fancy him seated on his "musnud" of royalty, bearing his "jika" of monarchy, and girded with the imperial girdle of despotism; which took place in October, 1798. The young prince was at Shiraz at the time of his uncle's death, from whence he was summoned by the Grand Vizier, Hadji Ibrahim, who took instant measures for his succession to the throne.

Whether the many striking instances of the

precarious fortunes of the princes of Persia—that devastating waste of life and eyes which had marked the reign of Agha Mahomed Shah—had harrowed the young prince's mind, or whether by nature he was endowed with a merciful disposition, which was his general characteristic, suffice it, that the quiet tenor of his reign was marked with the mildest despotism, of thirty-five years' duration; during which very long period (for Persia) order generally prevailed. Civilization followed in the train, and prosperity threw her broad mantle over Iran's thirsty soil, which had been before so stained with blood, so convulsed with strife, so disgraced by those horrid scenes, the recital of which is almost enough to "make the two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres," that she deserved to be blotted out of the map of nations.

His Majesty began his reign with some slight deviations, certainly, from that clemency and justice which I have endeavoured to establish for him; but this, for Persia, is thought nothing of; and there is one thing to be admitted, that in the then semi-barbarous state of the country, the ascent to the throne was generally through streams of blood. All competitors must be cut off, or so

mutilated as to render them incapable of holding the imperial diadem. The brother of the deceased Shah then lived, and had entered the lists of struggle for the empire. At this time the young King showed much personal courage, and his enemy was subdued, or rather was won over to surrender himself to his nephew, on his sacred oath that he would not put him to death. The oath was accepted, and he threw himself on the King's mercy. How did his Majesty observe his oath, and conscientiously, as he thought—that is, for a Persian conscience?* He ordered the poor wretch to be shut up in a room, the doors and windows of which were bricked up, and there the King's uncle fell a prey to starvation, some part of the floor being found to have been dug up with his hands, seemingly to assuage the pangs of hunger.

It was also said of him that one of his first orders, on ascending the throne, was for the execution of twelve thousand rebels at Kasvine, and to have their heads rolled into the bazaars, of which they made a "kella minnar," or pillar of skulls, in-

* I know of no word in their language which signifies "conscience;" and if there be any, it must be of the most latitudinarian dimensions.

tending to impose respect on the people by this terrible example.

Another slight blot in the character of this royal "kajar," and I have done with the dark shades of the picture. The Grand Vizier of the late monarch, Hadji Ibrahim, had proved himself the devoted friend of the young King in many instances; he was the first to proclaim the new Shah, and to bow the knee before him. A powerful rival to Hadji poured into the royal ear the leprosy of jealousy against the minister, aided by a golden bribe, with a view to having him displaced, and his great wealth confiscated. Gratitude for the services of the faithful minister soon melted in the royal breast at the shrine of avarice—that prevailing curse in the Persian character. Some pretence was necessary to degrade and punish the minister. It was soon found, and the Shah, in his pretended ire, ordered his eyes to be cut out.

Poor Hadji felt sensibly the ingratitude and injustice of the monarch, some expressions of which escaped him. The King, now in real ire, ordered his tongue to be cut out. This being done, the minister inveighed more loudly than ever against

the inhumanity of the King.* The minister was removed, and the King beginning to repent of his cruelties, it alarmed the wretch who had been the cause of them, and lest he might be impeached, he ordered one of the faroshes to dispatch him.

It is not true, as some historians assert, that the King ordered the execution of his minister; on the contrary, he for a long time sincerely deplored the loss of this upright and faithful servant. That custom of punishment by mutilation in Persia prevails even in the present day; the hand of the thief is cut off, they say, to prevent repetition of his crime; the tongue of the blasphemer is cut out, and so on. I trace a great many of the Persian customs to those of the Mosaic dispensations. In the case of Adonibezek, when he fled, "they pursued him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes."

The avarice of the Shah I have already alluded to, but am not surprised, when I consider the extent of his harem establishment, which approached pretty near to that of Solomon's. Including ser-

* I have been assured by an English doctor that if the tongue be cut out at the root, there is no impediment to speech; but if the tip only be cut, it is fatal to further talk.

vants, eunuchs, &c., I have heard it estimated that there were fifteen hundred persons to be daily "salted with the salt of the palace."

The Shah was also a family man, in the broad acceptation of the term; indeed, it may be said that his Majesty was the richest man in the world in family ties. It never could be ascertained, I believe, even by himself, the extent of his possessions in this respect, since it was not an uncommon thing to have two or three born to him the same night. The rank of propinquity (about which the Persians are so very particular) must in that case have been dubious, since no scarlet thread could be tied round the finger of the elder born, where they proceed not from the same mother. * I have heard of an hundred and fifty sons, and as many daughters. The precocious Persian youth, and the still more precocious maiden, who is often married at from twelve to fifteen years of age, soon glide into the noose of matrimony, and the consequences are generally numerous. His majesty was blessed with the third and fourth generations, and, as I

* "And it came to pass when she travailed, that the one put out his hand, and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, this came out first, and his name was called Zareh."—GEN. xxxviii. 28.

have observed, the family ties could never be told. I have heard them estimated at twelve hundred!

The King was considered to have been the handsomest man in his dominions; and this is saying a great deal (though by no means an oriental trope, since the Persians are a remarkably fine race of people); the most dignified in his manners, and the most amiable in disposition; and, as his subjects said of him, "he had arrived at the summit of power, and inhabited the mansions of wisdom and understanding." The following anecdote I think will prove his kindly feelings, as related to me by the doctor alluded to. Another kajar came to light—the mewling infant sickened, with symptoms of premature decay. It could scarcely be imagined that the monarch's care should be occupied with matters of so trifling moment—but it *was* so. With much anxiety to preserve the infant, other medical assistance was called in, and, as the doctor informed me, the King's alarm was excessive; he was affected even to tears, and appeared agonized. The infant recovered, and the doctor was elevated to the first class of the Lion and Sun.

Of Futtee Ali Shah it was said, that he was the richest man in the world, his personal treasury

amounting to thirty millions sterling, besides jewels, pearls, and precious stones, according to the Persian report, "by rooms full." Some remains of the plunder of the great freebooter Nadir Shah, from Delhi, remained to him, particularly the "Khor Nur" and the "Deriah Nur," those extraordinary diamonds, called "the mountain of light," and "the sea of light," which form his "buzubends," or armlets, the distinguishing badges of Persian majesty. I have heard it described by those who had witnessed it, that, to see him arrayed in his full splendour of sovereignty, it was almost too dazzling for "human ken." His musnud was worked with pearls, and his cushion studded with the same Persian ornaments, of an enormous size. The crown increases in breadth upwards, and is adorned with three diamond plumes, called the "jika," inscribed on the front, "Help from God, and speedy victory." His dagger and girdle are studded with diamonds. Then to see him—

"———— As his guard of mutes
On the dread sovereign wait with eyes deject
And fixed on earth, no voice nor sound is heard
Within the wide serai, but all is hushed,
Mute and uncovered, cowering low to earth."

His Majesty was a distinguished poet; "he could make the nightingale of the pen flutter about the full-blown roses of the harem;" and he was a liberal patron of this genius in others; nay, it was related of him, that he was at times so "perfumed with the dew of liberality," as to give his poet laureat a thousand tomauns for each line of an ode, containing twenty-three lines. The "rose and the nightingale" are the particular subjects of the poet's inspiration, of which they say, "the nightingale, if he sees the rose, becomes intoxicated." In this his Majesty had much of "the odour of reputation," as also for princely gifts occasionally to one of his favourite wives. I heard of two strings of pearls, each costing thirty thousand tomauns.

I have already shown that his Majesty had very materially thinned out his harem establishment during my stay in Persia, conferring the ladies on his khans, as a mark of special favour. I have had many an argument with these polygamists; but what do they say! "Show me from Holy Writ that any crime attaches to the custom." On the contrary, they contend that Scripture warrants it. Lamech is the first we notice, who took

unto himself two wives, Adah and Zillah. Jacob had a second wife imposed upon him, it not being the custom at that time "to give the younger before the first-born." I cannot find that this custom prevails now in Persia; but I do find that a man is bound to marry the widow of his deceased brother "in order to raise up seed unto his brother," as Moses wrote, or as the Sadducees relate, that "the seven had her to wife." Then they tell me of David and Solomon having numerous wives, and in their days, as at the present time in Persia, the royal harem formed the greatest part of the King's expenditure.

I have done with the subject, except to say, that I am a little inclined to the harem seclusion, but not to the full extent. In Persia, even sisters are not allowed to see their brothers after a certain age. What then would be the astonishment of an Asiatic to be introduced at once to that Rose Garden of Beauty which is sometimes to be met with in English society—that beauty thus spoken of by the poet:—

> "Oh! what a pure and sacred thing
> Is beauty curtained from the light
> Of the gross world, illumining
> One holy mansion with her light."

His Majesty showed considerable ingenuity in keeping up what may be termed "the balance of power" amongst his numerous sons, being all governors of provinces, so that they might not weaken the supreme authority, vested in himself, of which he was very jealous. The governor of Shiraz was never entirely subject to him; and his last expedition was against this contumacious son, in search of the tribute money. Of Abbas Meerza he was also jealous, not trusting him with the means of paying the troops, but sending it to the charge of an English major.

The numerous offspring of the Shah could not boast of much family concord amongst themselves. Where they are not born of the same mother, they are any thing but brethren; their interests are so conflicting, and all drawing upon the Shah's resources, that I am inclined to think his avarice savoured somewhat of prudence, and not altogether of rapacity.

His Majesty had a very high opinion of his own dignity and splendour. The Persians have a great deal of that overweening vanity, or happy delusion, which is so beguiling in this life of uncertainty. At an audience once granted to an ambassador, who

was much struck with his imposing magnificence, "I wish him joy," said the King, "he has now seen every thing!" His Majesty terminated his mortal career, after a long and prosperous reign of thirty-five years, at Ispahan, on the 23d of October, 1835, aged seventy-five years; during which time Persia had wonderfully progressed in civilization.

It may be well to conclude this chapter with a list of the titles of the Shah of Persia. The Persians have almost a sacred respect for their sovereign, calling him "Zil Allah," or, "The Almighty's Shadow." They esteem the very ground on which he sits to be holy; and obey the divine command to Moses, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet." They call him also, "Hazret," which signifies Presence, Majesty or Highness. He is the Vicegerent of Omnipotence upon Earth—the Most Lofty of Living Men—the Source of Majesty, of Grandeur, of Honour, and of Glory—whose Throne is the Stirrup of Heaven —Equal to the Sun, and Brother of the Moon and of the Stars—the King of Kings—Agent of Heaven in this World—Object of the Vows of all Mortal Men—Disposer of Good and of all Great Names—the Master of Destiny—Chief of the

Most Excellent Seat of the Universe, sitting in the Seat of the first temporal Being (Mahomet)—the greatest and the most splendid Prince of the Faithful—born and sprung from the Throne which is the only Throne of the Earth—King of the First Rank—Monarch of Sultans and of the Sovereigns of the Universe—First Noble of the most ancient Nobility—King—Son of a King—Emperor of all Corporeal Beings—Lord of the Revolutions of the World—Father of Victories—the Centre of the Universe, &c. &c. &c.

What a commentary on all this splendour are the words of our poet:—

> "Earth's highest station ends in 'Here he lies,'
> And 'dust to dust' concludes her noblest song."*

* In the burial of their kings they had formerly a superstitious custom in Persia. In order to prevent any enchantment being practised on the body, three stately coffins were prepared exactly alike, in one of which the royal clay was deposited; one was sent to Koom, another to Ardebie, and the third to Meshed; but in which of these coffins lay the kingly remains was never known. It may be presumed that his late Majesty lies at Koom, since he had given directions for the repairs of the tomb a short time only before his decease.

CHAPTER II.

THE KOORDS.

THESE nomade tribes of the wilderness are but little known in Europe. Having made an extensive acquaintance amongst them in my Asiatic wanderings, I will endeavour to give a slight sketch of their origin and history, which are so involved in obscurity that I must penetrate deep into their records, to obtain any thing like authentic facts concerning them.

These, the rudest of nature's families, occupy an extensive territory, called Koordistan, which it is said was the ancient kingdom of Chaldea, and that amongst the natives are some remains of the original stock, speaking the original tongue. They are to be met with near the lake Ouroumia, in

that part of the country through which I have passed. Other accounts state that they are originally from Arsacia, and the descendants of the tribes which harassed the "retreat of the ten thousand." Xenophon speaks of them under the name of "Kardouchoe," and says that "they were a people not subject to a king."

Koordistan comprises a part of Armenia Major and Diarbeker or Mesopotamia; it extends in the east as far as Persia, and on the south towards the environs of Bagdad. But the Koords are scattered over Asia in a variety of tribes. The most notorious for their ferocity are the Bilbossis and the Rewandoozis, who, retiring to their fastnesses and retreats, defy their pursuers, set at nought all government, and riot in their spoils. Some of the tribes are nominally subject to Persia, others to Turkey, so far as they are brought into any subjection, which is induced only by fear or by necessity, certainly not by loyalty, the meaning of the term being utterly unknown to them.

The tribes differ much in costume and equipment. Those at Maliz Ghird, whose hospitality I for some time partook of, but which savoured more of constraint than of courtesy, were very

fond of gaudy, showy colours. Their "aba," or cloak, was of striped camel-hair cloth, white and black, thrown loosely over the shoulders, and flowing down to the heels. Some of the chiefs wore red bag caps, hanging over the neck. The lower orders wore the felted cloth cap, bound around with a spotted kerchief of a pattern peculiar to themselves. The remainder of their dress was precisely that of the Turks,—with their large "shalwars" or trousers, their red boots or slippers. This, however, much depends on what they take from their neighbours.

The Koords are heavily armed with the pistols, the ataghan, and a carbine slung across their shoulders; they have also a long lance, which they use with much dexterity, and some of them carry a small shield, curiously studded with brass buttons, or other such material. They have also a steel corslet, inlaid with sundry devices, all of which were hieroglyphics to me. I have seen some of the Koords of Sulimania having long streaming silk tassels below the felt cap, flowing over the shoulders, giving them a striking appearance; but these were only the very *élite*—the Pasha and his grand vizier, &c.

From what I have seen of the territory of the Koords, they live in fat pastures, surrounded by a cluster of mountains, small and large, girding them in as it were, so that I have often thought it impossible to get out of the belt. These plains afford rich herbage for their flocks. The wealth of the pastoral tribes consists principally in their flocks and herds, and their land appeared to be overflowing with milk and honey. They cultivate but sparingly those plains, which yield grain of all sorts, cotton, tobacco, and flax. But what cultivation can be expected, when in the midst of it the mattock and the spade must be sometimes exchanged for the ataghan and the musket, to keep off their intrusive neighbours? Thus have I seen the cultivators put to flight by a flying band of Koords coming down amongst them, who in their turn were put to flight by one still stronger.

The mountains, some of which are almost inaccessible, afford safe retreats for themselves and their families. It may be truly said of them—

> "The wilderness is theirs with all its caves,
> Its hollow glens, its thickets, and its plains;
> Unvisited by man, there they are free.
> Woe to the tyrant if he dare intrude
> Within the confines of their wild domain."

The Koords are certainly the ugliest race that I ever met with. They have strong and coarse features, and a most fierce expression of countenance; and in the varied colours of their costume they present a most picturesque appearance. They have a contempt for civilized communities, looking upon warfare, pillage, and destruction, as the only professions worthy a Koordish gentleman. They riot in their wild freedom; the Goths and Vandals were nothing to them in these respects. They may be deemed the fiercest of all God's family of man—even more so than the Arabs and Bedouins.

The Koords are endowed with an indomitable courage, which is enhanced by the circumstances in which they are placed. They have to live upon the goods of their neighbours, which they must fight for; and so natural does it seem to them to take the property of others, that every stranger coming amongst them is deemed "lawful prize;" and as the opportunities for plunder do not often occur, they are extremely fierce and relentless in their attacks, particularly on caravans. They will also descend to petty thefts when they have no other opportunity of exercising their calling. A large caravan was plundered by

them in the year 1834, on the frontier between Turkey and Persia, and goods destroyed and plundered to the amount of one hundred thousand tomauns, and at great expense of life amongst the escort and muleteers.

The safety of those frontiers is mutually guaranteed by the respective governments of Turkey and Persia, for the passing of caravans; each of them undertaking to indemnify for the losses of merchandise. The attack I have just referred to was of so much importance, that an envoy was sent especially from the court of Tehran to the Ottoman Porte, to adjust the claims of the Persian merchants. I met the envoy at Erzroume.* The

* I had something to do with the attempt to settle this business, having met the Persian envoy and the Seraskier of Erzroume, with whom he was empowered to treat in full divan. The claims on the part of the Persian merchants amounted to 7300 purses of Turkish piastres, which at 500 piastres each purse was about £36,500 sterling. The Seraskier offered to pay 4600 purses, that being the amount of goods passed at the Custom-house. He said he was at great expense in paying the troops sent to chase the Koords from the territory;—adducing (aside), "I am entertaining the envoy here at my own cost of 1000 piastres per day. 'Kush guelden,' welcome, as he is, yet this comes out of my pocket." He further urged, that the Turks, under Meshety Ali, coming from Bagdad, were formerly robbed by the Persian Koords of 3000 purses, and nothing was ever paid by their government as indemnity. It was amusing, the contrast between

plundering Koords were the Jelady tribe, protected by Ali Khan. I should observe that such an attack was a rare occurrence, and that subsequently a Turkish army was sent down to rid the frontier of the marauders.

I cannot find that the Koords have any institutions or laws, civil or political, although they have many religious creeds. Their primitive religion was that of the ancient Persians; they were Ghebres, and adored the sun; prostrating themselves to it at its rising and setting. The tribes occupying the Turkish frontiers are Soonite Mahomedans. Those on the Persian territory profess the Sheah faith; but they are little troubled with religious scruples, and conscience is a term unknown to them.

Of books the Koords know nothing beyond the Koran; knowledge they have ever despised, and human life is held very cheap with them. Strong muscular limbs are deemed their best fortune, and an ataghan, pistols, and lance their heir-loom; their

Persian eloquence and Turkish taciturnity. The Turks are very tardy in their habits of business, and the conference was often renewed; but the envoy was inexorable, and finding that he could not succeed, he departed with his long train for Constantinople.

motto, "Our hand is against every man, every man's hand against us."

It is a singular feature in the history of these barbarous tribes, that they have maintained their savage independence for more than two thousand years, ever since the conquest of Asia Minor by the Romans, sixty-five years before Christ. Beyond the nominal annexation of their territory by Pompey, who made it a province of the Roman empire, no attempt has been made to organize them into a republic or a kingdom. "Who would be king of the Koords?" it may be asked. Yet what a fine field is offered for ambition to expend its power over a race which has never yet been brought within the limits of any rational rule!

The principal cities of Koordistan, such as Van, Ardelan, &c., are occupied by powerful chiefs of these people. They will levy sometimes forces of ten thousand men, well mounted and equipped. This was the estimated force of the Waly of Van when I was in that neighbourhood.

So long as the Koordish chief retains his powers he is much respected, or rather feared; but the moment a stronger than he gets the upper hand they pull him down, and give him the bow-string.

What knows a Koord about loyalty, attachment, or good faith? These are bugbears fit only to frighten the Ghiaours. These chiefs are for the time well obeyed, because their subjects need protection. Their manner of enforcing government is similar to that of all the Asiatics; despotism is the lever, and cruelty the agent.

I have passed many Koordish encampments, where it was necessary to propitiate the "waly" by a "bakshish," or present, by way of travelling security. These chiefs have authority only over their particular districts, beyond which they can offer no protection. They profess hospitality, and will render it to all who claim their shelter. Not one of them will molest a stranger who has eaten of his bread, nor suffer him to sustain any injury to person or property whilst under his tent. But your throat may be cut when you have passed his frontier for aught he cares; and the chances are that he will send notice to the neighbouring "waly" that you are coming his way, and that a good opportunity offers for plunder.

The Koords have been ever renowned for their courage; and it is related of their prophet Mahomet, that he said, "in uniting himself with them,

he would overturn the world." They live principally in tents, made of cloth of camel-hair, of their own weaving. Some of these tents are black, some of them of a brown colour; they are large and well matted, in which consists all their furniture. Others encamp in the open air. They dig a ditch round their camp; the ground serves them for a bed; their "aba" for a covering; and when preparing to sleep, they stick their lances into the ground, and tie their horses to stakes. I have visited many of these encampments, and as to their domestic arrangements, confusion seems to be the order of the day.

There was some attempt to keep up a sort of "harem kaneh," or woman's apartment, by means of screens, old curtains, and such like drapery; but these were very treacherous, presenting many chinks to the eye of curiosity.

The Koords are very hospitable, with their dark bread, cheese, and "yaourt," or sour milk. The latter is esteemed a great delicacy amongst them. From the age of seven years their sons are accustomed to the management of arms; the women even do not disdain this exercise, by which they acquire remarkable strength of body.

I must say of Koordish beauty, which I have occasionally seen through their tattered veils, or by means of some accidental display, that it was any thing but feminine. They are of a tawny colour, of great muscular strength, with long black hair, generally plaited, and hanging down, but occasionally streaming about in confusion. Their large black eyes are any thing but lustreless, and they beamed, as I thought, with mind, but it was of the wild and savage sort, speaking of the wilderness. They were mostly occupied with the distaff, having a coarse cotton or camel-hair thread, which they twisted round with their fingers. They are fond of ornaments, stringing coins round their forehead, and other parts. These fair daughters of Eve are of so much value to their parents, that they receive a dower for them in marriage, instead of giving one;—the husband thus paying a compensation for the services of which the parents are deprived.

It is calculated that in Turkey there are a hundred and sixty thousand tents of Koords, in each of which may be found at least two men fit for war; and being accustomed so early to the use of arms on horseback, they may be compared

to the Don Cossacks, but have infinitely more courage.

In the mountains of Sindjan, between Mosul and Mardin, is a tribe called Yezedees, who worship the devil, and hold him to be not only equal in power to the Deity, but to be more dreaded. A father will sometimes sacrifice his daughter to propitiate this idol, in case of any calamity. They hold it meritorious to destroy Jews or Christians, and will sometimes rush out and kill the first infidel that presents himself, as a sacrifice to Satan, imagining that by these sacrifices they can avert their calamities; so that travellers run a great risk when going through the country inhabited by these tribes. In Sulimania they are much less uncivilised. There they are subject to Persia, and used to pay a tribute to Abbas Meerza. Some of them are said to be Nestorian Christians. I have seen their chief, Mahmoud Pasha, at Tabreez, with his numerous suite, dressed in all the colours of oriental gaudiness; the most imposing part of it being the silk streamers already alluded to, and of which they appear to be very proud.

On seeking new pastures, the domestic effects

of the Koords are placed on the backs of their cattle, — camels, donkeys, or buffaloes; and a moving Koordish encampment is one of the most picturesque scenes I have witnessed during my travels in the wilderness—children and chickens in panniers, kettles and carpets, tents and other sundries, followed by their flocks and herds—such a *mélange* as was never seen in Ferengistan. Their principal amusement is "chuppowing," or plunder. This is their element. In these affairs they carry off cattle, women, and children, reducing the latter to slavery. They murder the men before the plundering commences. They sometimes come down and sack entire villages. I have passed many so treated, and found scarcely any remaining inhabitant. In one instance, the father came to us for money to redeem his children from slavery, the Koords having only a short time before plundered the village of all its contents, including the children. These were Armenians. At this place we could not obtain even a morsel of bread; and how the few remaining people sustained life, I could never imagine. At other villages we were kept off by the inhabitants from the roofs of the houses preparing to fire upon us, as any party seen in

the distance on horseback are supposed to be Koords.

To account for the plundering habits, or "chuppowing," of the Koords, some writers assert that they even form schools to train their children to habits of robbery, teaching their youths murder and rapine as meritorious in the eyes of heaven. They penetrate camps and cities, impelled by fanatic zeal, the fruits of the lessons inculcated by the chiefs, styled "old men of the mountains."

"Set a Koord to catch a Koord," is a good maxim here. I have often travelled with them as an escort through their own country; and it is amusing to see them on their small horses playing the "jereed;" at full gallop they will throw their lance to the ground, and recover it with wonderful agility. They will pick up sticks from the ground at full speed, turning almost under the belly of the horse without losing their seat. They pull up their horses in a moment, wheeling round in pursuit with a dexterity which would puzzle any European. They amused me much on the plain below Ararat, where an escort was indispensable. On the mountains some of

their brethren were carrying off the cattle. In a moment some of our party went in pursuit of the plunderers, and we did not wait the result.

These Koords give a great interest to Asiatic travel; they keep one on the *qui vive*, and relieve that monotony of trackless plains and arid mountains, which is the general characteristic of such travel. I once joined a party of travellers to pass the frontiers, who had congregated together for mutual protection. Our escort consisted of sixty Koords, granted to us by the Pasha of Erzroume. They were well armed and mounted, and, preceded by their chief, they made a most formidable appearance. The travellers were placed in the centre, our guards preceding and following. It was amusing to see with what vigilance they surveyed the ravines and difficult passes, expecting every moment to he surprised by their bandit brethren. On slowly winding up the hill the scouts cried out, "the Koords! the Koords!" and we saw a large party, with their red bag caps and striped abas, coming down upon us, at moderate pace and in good order. The chiefs mutually advanced, and in parley found that they were similarly employed by the Pasha. They

were on the return from escorting a party of travellers over the frontier, to which we were now tending. The courteous "kush guelden" was exchanged, and we were led to expect that no dangers awaited us.

I had once an interview with Bahool Pasha, a Koordish chief, at Toprach Kaleh, to ask of him an escort on my dangerous way. This chief had been renowned for his successes against the predatory Koords in this district, and his name inspired terror amongst them. In such cases the Pasha must be first propitiated by a "backshish," or present; nothing is to be done with these rude people without presents. Having announced my intention of a visit, which is always necessary in such cases, I mounted my horse, and, preceded by my dragoman, made my way towards the "Earthen Castle," as his residence was called, by a steep ascent to a great height. The way was tortuous and difficult. The hall of audience, to my surprise, was nothing but a large stable. The master of the ceremonies received me at the door, and I was conducted through a bevy of bare-legged attendants, the stable being well lined with guests, squatting on the ground near the walls, all smoking,

and looking most intently on the Ghiaour making his way to the seat of honour. At the farther end the Pasha was sitting in state, surrounded by the officers of his household; the Kaveh Bashi, the Tchibook Bashi, and other Bashis, looking very fierce, bare-legged, and well armed.

I was accosted with the "kush guelden," or welcome, and a seat placed for me at the Pasha's left hand. Coffee and pipes were immediately introduced, and we drew some long whiffs together before the conversation was introduced. It related to the purport of my visit, the place whence I came, and whither I was going—all this passing through my dragoman, the Pasha not understanding Persian, and I not speaking Turkish. I had previously laid the "backshish" or present at his feet, which he did not deign to notice nor to examine, much less to thank me for it. This was the tribute money, and the only way to Koordish favour. After sundry talk, he at length asked what I wanted of him? This was coming to the point, and I was rather puzzled so to frame my request that I might not show distrust of his own people; so I requested, in case of danger or difficulty in this strange country, the mighty protec-

tion of his passport, and the convoy of some of his troopers. This was immediately granted, the audience broke up, and I was conducted with the same ceremony to resume my saddle.

On coming out, the numerous Bashis surrounded my dragoman, crying out "backshish." I replied that I had already rendered it to the Pasha. But the hungry servants must be feed too; so to avoid Koordish mobbing, I was obliged to draw my purse-strings, and count out the ducats, which my dragoman distributed amongst them. As I rode off, the Pasha came out to enquire what I had given to the servants, as he takes the greater part of it from them! I heard afterwards that he was satisfied with what I had given; which was more than I could say myself; for I found a Koordish audience rather expensive. The servants have no other pay in Turkey than what they get from visitors; and their masters (as in this case) often divide the spoils with them.

We see in the Koordish tribes many millions of people remaining unsubdued to any yoke, forming fine troops if you can discipline them; impetuous warriors if you can guide them. In these fine provinces are boundless estates, open to all occu-

piers, rent and tax free; and if civilization could but throw her mantle over them, and bring order out of confusion, good government out of anarchy, what a blessing would it prove to the Asiatic traveller!

CHAPTER III.

PERSIAN SOVEREIGNTY.

THERE is no difficulty in penetrating into the genius of the Persian government, since it is all comprised in "the purest despotism." The sovereign of Iran is deemed to be the most absolute in the world; the will of the King rules every thing; his subjects are "less than the dust of the earth" in his presence; with the breath of his mouth he can annihilate them.

It is a remarkable fact in the history of this country, that from the reign of Ahaseurus (now more than two thousand years ago), notwithstanding the various revolutions which have so devastated Persia, the same despotic power has been handed

down even to the present sovereign. We behold Ahaseurus, by the word of his mouth, threatening to destroy "all the Jews that were throughout all the kingdom." At later periods we see Abbas the Great putting to death with his own hand an innocent traveller while asleep, because his horse started at him; and Agha Mahomed Shah putting out the eyes of those who ventured to look at his hideous countenance.

With such extraordinary power, it cannot be wondered at that the characters of the Persian sovereigns should be brutalised, and from their being accustomed to the shedding of blood, to directing and witnessing all executions, that their nature should become hardened. But the reverse of this was the general characteristic of the late Shah; and on comparing history with history, it is an astonishing fact, as stated by Hollinshed, that in England, "during one reign, more than seventy thousand persons suffered by the common executioner; which is at least six daily, Sundays included! To contrast this with the results of a despotic government, I learnt that in Persia, in the province of Azerbijan, containing nearly a million of people, only seven executions had taken place

in the course of sixteen years, under the mild sway of Abbas Meerza.

But the arbitrary power of the sovereign becomes much more sanguinary in those to whom it is delegated, whether to his sons or to the governors of provinces. These often begin their reign by creating strong impressions of terror, and new cruelties are invented in every shape, to add to the sufferings of their victims. Among the expedients for protracting their tortures are impaling their bodies; burying them alive head uppermost, forming what they call "living gardens;" hanging them by the heels in the market places, as the butcher does his carcases; casting women headlong from the tops of high towers (several were thus thrown off just previous to my last visit to Tabreez). But such cruelties belong for the most part to gone-by history, rather than to the present day; and they emanate more from the low-born delegate than from the Shah himself; although the latter, in a gust of fury, may sometimes sweep off whole families. On condemning a Khan to death, his property may be confiscated, his dwelling annihilated, his wives and children scattered to the winds,

or given over as slaves to the lowest of the people; thus making the name of king—

> "As dreadful as the Manichean God,
> Adored through fear, strong only to destroy."

Of these furious devastations we have frequent instances during the reign of Nadir Shah, and other Persian sovereigns. In this country executions are summary, as I once found at Tabreez. Complaint was made against a delinquent by a Khan whom I well knew; he was immediately brought before the Ameer y Nizam (a man of extraordinary tenderness for a Persian), the enquiry was short, the sentence prompt. This was at noon; the muzzin singing out the "azan," or the call to prayer, the Ameer dropped on his knees; the culprit was brought up, and whilst the Prophet was being thus invoked the man was strangled. The Ameer went on with his prayers—the delinquent's head was rolling on the maidan—all in half an hour!

But the Persians have their palladium of rights, (if I may so say,) amounting almost to an habeas corpus. These are the *busts*, or places of refuge, consisting principally of the stables of the king,

and sometimes the mosques or shrines of holy men, at Koom, at Meshed, &c., which are deemed the most sacred asylums, (particularly the former,) and are regarded with superstitious reverence as sanctuaries. The delinquent sheltering himself in the stable of the king, even his Majesty himself, who is "equal to the sun, brother of the moon, and whose throne is the stirrup of heaven," dares not intrude in the sanctuary; and he is even obliged to feed the culprit whilst he remains there. The slave who has murdered his master cannot be touched, and even in the open air he finds refuge at the head of the horse.

The mosques are chiefly resorted to by debtors, and I knew one at Tehran who had been living in a mosque for nearly twelve months. It may be imagined that these sanctuaries are filled with refugees; but it was not so, nor do I remember more than one instance of a criminal taking the bust. The murderer may be slain the moment before or after he comes to sanctuary, but when once there the absolute Shah of Iran could not touch him. These places of refuge are derived, I imagine, from the Mosaic dispensation, to which I trace so many of the Persian customs—"the

cities of refuge from the avenger, both for the children of Israel and for the stranger, and for the sojourners amongst them."

On the personal character of the sovereign depends almost entirely the weal or woe of his empire; his wisdom and conscience (if he have any) rule everything; he makes war for his own personal glory, not for the good of his people; he appoints his successor without any reference to legitimate rights. In the late reign, Abbas Meerza, when constituted crown prince by his father, was not the elder born, but a Kajar, and the son of one of the king's favourite wives; the king gave him precedence, therefore, over the previous son of a Georgian slave.*

I have heard that the late crown prince's manner before the Shah was of the most abject kind; he would prostrate himself even at his horse's feet, and kiss the ground, to show his obedience, and

* Mahomed Ali Meerza died in November 1821, and is described as having been a brave and gallant prince. The Shah, although he had set aside his right as crown prince, was said to have been very sensible of his loss, though he bore it with much heroism; "God has given me many sons, and has been pleased to take one away. I have nothing to complain of; had it happened by treachery, or in battle, I should have been distressed."

even for a mile or two would run before the Shah, not daring to mount his horse without receiving the royal command so to do.

The princes are always viewed with jealousy by the King; the parental and filial ties are usurped by distrust and suspicion. One of the former tyrants of Persia, Abbas the Great used to keep the "shah zadehs," or princes, in captivity, and to blind those of whom he had any apprehension of their disturbing his power. The late Shah was jealous even of his favourite son. He was set at defiance by the governor of Sheeraz, Hoosein Ali Meerza, and must have felt, amidst all his "pomp and circumstance," that "poor is the friendless master of a world." Not a human being could he trust; friendless and feared, he must have shivered at the sight of even his own progeny. What a system! Ease and happiness bartered for pomp and thorns! quiet sleep for troubled dreams! Our bard's description truly applies to the Persian monarch; "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

The King always speaks of himself in the third person; his strongest oath, which obviates all possible disbelief on the part of his auditory, is,—"Be ser Shah,"—"by the head of the King!"

"Be jan Shah,"—"by the soul of the King!" for so deeply tinctured with duplicity is the Persian character, that even majesty himself is conscious that he may not always obtain the most implicit credence.

One of the royal prerogatives consists in being allowed to see the women of his empire unveiled, of which it was said the late Shah availed himself pretty freely.

There is a something like law in Persia, founded on the Koran, by which the duties of the judge are combined with those of the priest. The president of the court of "sherreh," or law, is the "Sheik ul Islam," or the chief of the Mahomedan faith. Their courts are attended by the "mustoofies," or counsellors, and they have the power occasionally to protect the people from the rapacity of the sovereign, whose duties are most onerous. When the law adjudges criminals, the King must order the execution. He is, however, generally guided by the decisions of the courts, except in cases where the offence is dangerous to his power or person. It is a maxim, that "the King can do no wrong," and that he is completely exempt from all control or authority.

The late Shah was very strict in the execution of all robbers; such impressions of terror being necessary for the quiet and security of his empire, which enjoyed great tranquillity during his reign. In the courts of law all judicial proceedings take place; and, as may be imagined, the decisions of the judges are open to the highest bidders. Corruption and tyranny usurp the place of equity. But criminal justice emanates from the King, or from his myrmidons in power. Nothing whatever interferes with his despotic will, except as he may be governed by prudence, by conscience, or by fear.

The punishment of the "shekeh" I have already alluded to. In regard to the cutting out of the tongue, it was stated to me by an English doctor, that if it be cleared out at the root, there is no impediment whatever to speech, but if a portion be left, it is fatal to all farther articulation. Of the former I have had evidence, having heard a man who was tongueless talk with his accustomed rapidity. *

His Majesty had a very dignified and polite way of ruining any of his subjects, whose power he feared, or whose riches he coveted; he merely an-

* See note, page 5.

nounced that on such a day the King proposed to dine with Allaya Khan. The Khan, overwhelmed at the honour, makes immense preparations, wishing his Majesty at the same time at the bottom of Jehanum. On the day appointed, the King proceeds with his numerous suite, who have orders to waste and destroy to the utmost. The Khan crouches at the feet of the Shah, seeing his substance melt away in the sunshine of majesty, who gloats over his intended victim with ruthless barbarity. The deception is carried on till the intended catastrophe shows itself; the visits are renewed until the Khan is reduced to beggary.

Other expedients consist of sending royal presents to the intended victim, who can ill afford to pay for them; the custom being to make returns to the full value, or even *more*, than the "peiscush" or present. This often leads to dispute, and what was begun in seeming courtesy, ends in angry strife. The Shah will continue this even for some weeks, until he has ruined his victim.

Such is the respect paid to majesty, that his royal firmans or letters are dignified by the most reverential observances of the receivers. Those of the princes, also, are received with similar respect,

such as raising it to the forehead, and then kissing it with the profoundest humility. * The Persian sovereigns have been generally religious observers of the Mahomedan faith, which seems to be the most effectual check on their power. The late Shah was superstitious to a considerable degree, and paid great respect to the sanctity and learning of holy men, particularly to Syeed Mohammed Bakir, of Ispahan; it was even said that he would demean himself before him. Such religious men have great influence over the minds of the people; they become their spiritual rulers, and may exercise a power over the throne even greater than that of the throne itself.

In tracing their history, it appears that the Persians have changed but little as a people since the days of Darius; their habits are nearly the same, such as their aboriginal mode of feeding, sleeping, &c. This was also true as to their mode of warfare, until the recent and partially introduced European discipline. In their mountain tribes there is still little or no difference, and the remoteness of Iran from Ferengistan will perhaps

* All Persian letters are made up in the form of a thread paper, being fastened with gum. The paper is blue, highly glazed, and of Russian manufacture.

account for their ancient nationality to the present day.

The most remarkable historic fact connected with Persia is that of her surviving so many other empires—the Chaldean, the Grecian, the Roman, &c. Whilst portions of the earth once densely inhabited have become deserts, and the very date and place of once crowded cities are now almost problematical, Persia survives. It has, however, outgrown *some* of its ancient discipline, as described by Herodotus. "They were taught three things in their education, to manage the horse, to use the bow with activity, and to speak the truth. A numerous offspring was looked upon by them as the greatest blessing which God could bestow; to affirm a falsehood was accounted the greatest infamy next to that of being in debt, which exposed a man to the necessity of lying." How they have fallen from their first estate, my reminiscences wofully show; and although the Persian empire has survived the wrecks of ages, and outlived so many other powerful kingdoms, yet what a shadow is it now of its former greatness, when in its palmy days six millions of warriors were assembled under one banner! more than one-half the entire population

of the present day,—which Sir John Malcolm estimated at ten millions; being about a hundred to the square mile.

The revenues of Persia, so far as any estimate can be made of them, the same writer calculates at six millions sterling, partly derived from the "sadir," or arbitrary impost, already alluded to, and the "peiscush," or voluntary offerings of the "Nu Rooz." The villages are farmed by the different Khans, and yield a certain income. Then there is the "gumrook," or duties on imports and exports, which is not very heavy. These and other miscellaneous sources supply the income of the Shah of Persia, the deficits being made up of spoliations.

Persia affords one instance that despotism is the most enduring of all governments, and China is another proof. What a lesson this to the rampant democrats, who threaten to swamp all governments, and to annihilate all monarchies; and who had lately in a neighbouring country nearly burst the floodgates of democracy, perhaps to their own utter destruction, and to the dislocation of the other states of Europe.

On my travels in the dominions of "his most despotic majesty," order, peace, and contentment

reigned. In the places I have visited, no attempt was ever made to upset constituted authorities, no resistance to legitimate taxation, no noisy agitator spouting rebellion and threatening to dissever an empire; nothing of the sort can happen in Persia; the noisy demagogue would quake before Majesty instead of deriding it;—a breath of the Shah's mouth would silence the traitor. I have great respect for dignities; not that which degenerates into slavish fear, and converts a rational creature into a mandarin; but a religious loyalty to the powers that be, whether it be "to the king as supreme, or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him." Though I have seen the Asiatics fly at the presence of their sovereign, yet I deem the Persian peasant's a much more enviable lot than the British artisan's, if once stimulated by democratic licentiousness, the frenzy of which has lately so cankered our isles. If power become diseased, and its equilibrium be lost, if there be no happy medium, I would say—Persia and its despotism, in preference to England with a licentious democracy.

With all abjectness to their government, there is a sort of recklessness in the Persian character;

they are joyous and light-minded, there being no to-morrow for them. It may be well imagined that they are not given to any thing like grief or despondency. Hypochondriacism is alike unknown to themselves or their language; there is such a fluctuation in their fortunes, and they are so buoyant in their expectations, that to be disgraced by the sovereign is no disgrace to them; they are all subject to it, and they may be raised to-morrow to the pinnacle of greatness. If despoiled of their fortunes, though they feel it sensibly, they expect by intrigue and industry to retrieve them. I have seen them with an atlas of difficulties weighing upon them, under which they may bend, but are never to be subdued.

My observations of the Persian character confirm the remark of Mr. Forbes Winslow, in his late most able and interesting work, "The Anatomy of Suicide," in which he says—"In despotic countries suicide and insanity are seldom heard of; the passions are checked by the nature of the government." Of insanity I never heard of any instance in Persia; of self-destruction only one at Tabreez. I allude to the case of Hadji Cossim blowing his brains out with a pistol. He was generally es-

teemed "audem akl," a man of sense, and "fikir" also of "reflection;" and what made it the more unaccountable, so far as any motive can be divined for it, he was a man in easy circumstances, not connected with trade; he had a good income, derived from the rent of houses and gardens. Amongst the former was that of the British residency, of which he was the proprietor. Another instance occurred during my stay at Constantinople in the year 1836, of a Persian merchant drowning himself in the Bosphorus, owing it was supposed to some silk speculations and other commercial involvments.

The Persians are very incredulous, and tenacious of being imposed upon by untruths, in which they deal so liberally themselves. I have been often appealed to, to confirm the statement made by others: "Although (say they) we tell lies ourselves, we do not like it in others." They are amazingly fond of news, and eager for information, and will talk on religion, politics, and any subject with much vivacity, accosting you with "Che kabre"—What news? They are never at a loss themselves, for their lively imaginations will supply the absence of all gazettes. I had some dif-

ficulty in getting credence amongst them for some of my English anecdotes, such as travelling in this country without horses faster than they could with them. As to conveying to them a correct idea of steam power, that I gave up in despair; I pointed to the steam issuing from a tea-kettle, and endeavoured to explain how it acted as a momentum in driving us through the air. How Hadji laughed! "Tamum shud ast,"—"it is finished," he said; "I never can believe that." Nothing in the Thousand and One Nights could be more marvellous to the Persians. It was an extravaganza far beyond any thing they could offer. Then again, as to our having a passage under the Thames: my attempts to explain this brought me into great discredit. But when I declared I had myself been in it, "Raust ast!"—"It is true!" they exclaimed, but with a look and expression which evidently showed that they did not believe a word of the matter.

CHAPTER IV.

DOMESTIC LIFE IN PERSIA.

THIS is rather a tender subject for the Ferengee stranger. It is most difficult to pry into the penetralia of Persian society, since with all their politeness, they have a secret contempt for kaffirs, or infidels, and many have an aversion from being mixed up with them. As to domesticating oneself with a Persian family, that is quite out of the question. They have a code of religious laws, called the Jumah Abassi, which reckons the touch of infidels to be pollution; and they would not use their drinking vessels, pipes, &c. Of the latter I have seen many exceptions; but I speak *generally.*

It is true at the present day what Herodotus said of the Persians of old—that "they esteem themselves the most excellent of mankind." Flattery and falsehood are two prominent features of their character;—the former they call "laughing at his beard." The latter, Saadi thus speaks of: "Falsehood, mixed with good intentions, is preferable to truth tending to excite strife." This latter is so proverbial amongst them, that they do not deny it, nor is it at all esteemed a national reproach. I heard a Persian once admit, that from this habitual custom of falsehood, he *could* not speak the truth if he tried. I have even heard the habit of deceiving considered as a *virtue*, and most plausibly argued upon as such. "Suppose the Ketkodeh of a village is able to protect the lives or property of the people by falsehood—is he not justified, or even bound, to have recourse to it?" Falsehood may be deemed, therefore, a principal ingredient in their society as a social body; and to avoid the effects of government tyranny and oppression, they have recourse to all sorts of lying and duplicity.

But in the domestic life of Persia this habit has an appalling effect. Servants practise it with

astonishing hardihood, and it leads to those barefaced frauds which are common amongst them. Cheating is so well understood to be a part of the service, or rather the gains by it, that they adopt it without remorse, or having any sense of its being wrong. But this demoralising principle extends into the bosoms of families; and the finer feelings of confidence, love, and respect amongst each other are uprooted by suspicion, jealousy, and mistrust—those venomous enemies to all domestic peace.

The urbanity of the Persians is generally admitted; it is said of them that they are the politest people in the East. Fond of the marvellous, and of most imaginative minds, they carry their courtesy so far as to coin the most wonderful stories merely for your amusement: they deceive in order to please you. Their vanity, too, has something to do with this, since it proves the versatility of their genius, and their great desire to be thought well of.

The lower orders of Persia are great observers of ceremonies between each other, and use the most courteous phrases. This I have noticed amongst the numerous servants in the "kaveh

khanehs," or waiting rooms; they are as polite as their masters, the Khans, within.

As the Persians generally rise with the sun, their visits are sometimes made as early as six o'clock in the morning. The Khans, and great men, go on horseback, attended by numerous followers—one bearing his pipe, another his slippers, &c. The great man of the house, seated on his nummed, receives his guests, who are placed most scrupulously according to rank, his left hand being the seat of honour. The numerous servants outside are meanwhile preparing kalleons,* tchibooks, coffee, &c., according to the demands for the same.

Sitting back on the legs is the invariable Persian custom. From this position the host gets up, and compliments his guests with "My eyes

* Smoking the kalleon is the favourite amusement of the Persians. This is a small glass decanter, partly filled with water, in which a long tube is fixed, terminating at the top with a cup, of enamelled work, to contain the tobacco, another tube being fixed to the decanter, either straight or with a long snake of curious workmanship. By drawing the smoke through the water, the tobacco is rendered mild and agreeable. So inveterate is the national taste for this indulgence, that when Shah Abbas decreed death to all smokers, intending to abolish the custom, the Persians would hide themselves in the dens and caves of the earth, to enjoy in privacy this necessary to their existence.

are enlightened at seeing you—I am your slave—all I have is yours;"—honied words these, but utterly without meaning.

The Persians boast much of their hospitality; they call every stranger their guest; and at his departure or arrival, each person rises on his knees with the "Khoda hafiz shuma," "May God take you into his holy keeping." This has an odd effect. The moment a guest comes in, he drops on his knees, and then go on the "chum y chum," or compliments. At taking leave he receives the "zhamets," the "kali zhamets," &c., already alluded to; then resuming his slippers at the door, he bustles out, the servants after him, mounts his horse, makes many bows, and the "jeloodar," or head groom, conducts him out with all possible "pomp and circumstance."

Coffee, tea, and sweetmeats are the general refreshments offered, and scarcely at any time of the day will this be wanting at a visit; sherbet and fruit are offered occasionally. Many of the Khans and government officers are expected to attend the morning salaam, or Shah's levee. The other classes disperse, as business or circumstances may attract them.

The Persians are fond of good eating. Their breakfasts are substantial, consisting of the "narinj" or pillau, sundry fruits, cotolettes, pickles, &c. Beef they eschew; even servants will not eat it. Their bread is flat and unleavened. They breakfast at noon, and dine at sunset. Their dinner is even more substantial than the breakfast. It consists sometimes of a lamb roasted, stuffed with plumbs. Then comes the "chillow," which is rice in abundance, and this so beautifully boiled (served up quite dry), that it is any thing but an English dish. I am quite unable to speak of the numerous *entremets* that came before me at my first Persian dinner, which was with the Khan at Makoo.

As this event formed an era in my Persian experience, I will describe it somewhat in detail. The village presented a most singular outline; I saw patches of mud planted here and there on jutting eminences overhung by the mountain, which threatened every moment to crush them. The whole of the buildings appeared baked as in a kiln; not a shrub or green patch was visible. The heights showed some signs of fortifications, a species of Martello towers being planted here and there. This was on my first arrival in Persia,

and my mind having been previously imbued with imaginations of the "gul and bulbul," the nightingale and the rose—the ground covered with silk, and the air scented with musk—I could scarcely awake to the literally *bare* reality before me, of mud walls baked by the sun.

Being invited to dine with the Khan, who sent horses for us, we made our way by a sort of corkscrew ascent, keeping the saddle by clinging to the mane of the horse, and the more I ascended the more did this wonderful place look as though it had been vomited out in hasty confusion from the cavern whose jaws were opening before us. Confusion reigned every where; the wretched mud hovels were scattered here and there, some perched on the tops, others in the hollows of this extraordinary place. The buildings were surmounted with a dome formed in the rock, of at least four hundred feet high, a fragment of which I imagined would grind the whole to powder.

We were politely received by the Khan and his two sons on the roof of the house. Numerous attendants were bearing hawks on their perches, serving kalleons to the smokers, &c. The whole scene had a striking effect, which was heightened

THE AUTHOR DINING WITH THE PRINCE OF MASCO

by the fine appearance of the Persians, with their dark countenances, and curly black locks hanging down below their caps,* and their long robes, some of shawl, others of light drab cloth. I formed on this occasion a most favourable opinion of the natives, whatever I might have thought of their country.

The Khan came forward as we entered, with "Koosh amadeed;" "You are welcome. Your king is friendly to my king, and I hope will long remain so." I made my most profound salaams to his Khanship, replying as appropriately as I could, though my eloquence was terribly damped by fatigue and hunger. Prayers then began, as already alluded to. All this while I was sitting back on my legs, in the most fatiguing of all positions. The Khan laughed at my embarrassment, and once or twice said, "Stretch out your legs." I pleaded how unpolite it would be to expose myself longitudinally; so doubling myself up as well as I could, I reclined against the wall and sat in tortures.

* All Mahomedans shave the crown of the head. The Persians leave a curly lock of hair behind each ear; the Turks leave a tuft on the top of the head, for the convenience of the executioner to take it up by when decapitated!

At length the "sofra" was brought in a long striped coloured cloth, and laid at our feet on the ground. (I have already explained that Persian furniture consists of carpets merely). In the bustle of laying the cloth I got my legs under the "sofra," and sat pretty well. There was a similar cloth laid for the Khan, and another for his two sons. A ewer and basin were carried round, the servant dropping on his knee to each person, and pouring the water over the hands. Then the trays were brought in.

The sort of dinner I have already described; there was sherbet in china bowls, and ladles therein; but of knife, fork, spoon, plate or glass, saw I none. I looked wistfully at my friend; for though not very particular about a *silver* fork, not to have *any* seemed going to the other extreme: and as to dipping one's finger in the dish! I abstained for some time, but hunger is imperative; so I watched the Khan, who began by eating the napkin! literally so, for it was made neither of cotton or flax, but of flat unleavened bread, a long flap of which being placed before each person, they draw their rice and sundries upon it, wipe their greasy fingers in the corners, and then swallow it!

They take the fowl in their hand, strip off its limbs, and as a particular mark of attention, hand a leg or so to their neighbours. I was not so distinguished, since the Persians deem it unclean to eat off the same tray with "kaffirs," or infidels, and I query if the servants did not cast to the the dogs the remains of our dinner.

To make the greasy rice into "lugmehs," or balls, is rather difficult. They convey them to the mouth very gracefully, in spite of the hairy impediments of mustache and long beard. In my many attempts I found the rice getting into the sleeve of my coat instead of its proper destination. The Khan was much amused at my awkward attempts, crying out "Barikallah!" "Well done!" and asked how I got on. I did pick up my fill at last, with some difficulty; but one must be terribly hungry to conform to this aboriginal mode of feeding.

At the end of the repast the ewer and basin were again brought round, and then the never failing "kalleon and tchibook." The gravity of feeding being now at an end, the hilarity of conversation began; and the small cup of coffee gives zest to it. I have been thus particular on

the occasion of my dining with the Khan at Makoo, because it may serve as a description of all Persian dinners of ceremony.

The Persians are generally a merry joyous sort of people, seemingly careless of to-morrow, leaving all to "telleh," or destiny; for they are deeply imbued with fatalism, the favourite doctrine of the Koran. They amuse themselves with games of backgammon and chess. The latter they are very skilful at, and it is said to be of Persian origin. They have other amusements, such as the "pehlewans" or wrestlers, buffoons, musicians, and dancers. The former I have seen perform, and deemed it very disgusting. Want of personal cleanliness is the general characteristic of the Persians. Sometimes they scarcely change their linen until they are compelled to do so at the bath.

It is impossible for a Ferengee stranger to learn much of female society in Persia. Slaves to their tyrants, and strangers to all other motives and considerations but immediate personal gratification, they are uninfluenced by the finer ties of affection and sympathy, and become mere instruments to the pleasures of their lords. Some

of the harem histories must be very curious could they be brought to light—where four wives, for instance, are struggling for the ascendancy of their lord's favour! My chief information on this point was derived from a "Khanum" herself; and to account for my acquaintance, I must say that she was no other than a country-woman. It required no little courage in an English female to follow one of "the Persian youths" (as they were then called), who were sent to England in 1815, under the care of Colonel d'Arcy, for professional education. This "youth" is now a burly Khan of nearly half a ton weight, the chief of the arsenal at Tehran. She *did* so, however, and the leading feature of the marriage contract was, that he should take to himself no other wife during her life-time; to which contract, I believe, he was faithful. I was much struck at first to hear my own vernacular tongue spoken from under a veiled and hooded khanum; when lo, she proved to be a native of Britain. She had established quite an English household, even to knives and forks, and her *menage* altogether was respectable. Her husband was kind and liberal. Their little girl was

brought up by his family to the most rigid orthodox faith; whilst the mother retained her Christian profession.

At my second visit to Persia, in 1831, my countrywoman had been buried in a garden outside the town, having succumbed to the plague or cholera, both of which had so devastated Tabreez in 1830. The Khan had taken to himself two other wives, and was looking as jocund as ever. The little girl was no longer visible to *me*; as I went to pay her a visit she ran off with most amusing speed, burying her face in her hands, with all that "shamefacedness" so peculiar to this people. Her father had pledged her in marriage to a respectable party.

This English khanum was shrewd and intelligent, and had acquired a proficiency in the Persian language. She had also a fine taste for drawing, many exquisite specimens of which I saw, such as likenesses of the ladies of the harem, one of which appears as the frontispiece to my first volume. She was frequently invited to visit the Prince's wives; and scarcely any European has, perhaps, seen so much of this portion of Persian domesticity before. Her anecdotes respecting the haremites were very amusing and

piquante. She dwelt much on their listnessness of character, their yawning propensities, their being so "dully sluggardised at home," as to be incapable of almost any effort, mental or bodily. If any thing could move them, it was the sight of the eunuchs, who kept up the strictest discipline in the harem, occasionally striking them on the mouth with the iron heel of their slippers. Ignorant to the most amusing degree, they did but just know the sun from the moon, the night from the day. It was indeed rumoured, that in the best informed circles, some of them actually knew the summer from the winter! But their ignorance is bliss; they have no wants, no cares, every thing being provided for them most abundantly. There is no to-morrow for them; sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. They embroider and spangle their robes and slippers, and some of them will finger the "kamooncha" a little, a sort of guitar. They are said to be fond of music, and of making a noise with the "dyra halka dur," a sort of tambourine with rings. But the inexhaustible resource of the Persian ladies is the bath, where they spend whole days at a time, smoking the kalleon, eating

sweetmeats, dying their hair and eyebrows black,* their nails and hands and soles of their feet yellow, and otherwise adorning their persons.

These baths are sometimes fitted up in good style; being ornamented with flowers, scented with perfumes, &c. The ladies, when ornamented and in full costume, are thus described by one of their own poets:—

> "Their glowing cheeks have tints that cast
> A shadow on the rose's bloom;
> Their eyes by Lailis unsurpassed,
> Give splendour to the deepest gloom."

The Persian women wear amulets or charms to keep off the evil eye, of which they are much afraid. These talismans are engraved with sentences from the Koran. They bind them around their temples, over their shoulders, &c. They are very superstitious, and have their lucky and unlucky days. Of the ghouls or goblins they have

* The hennah used in these dyes is said to be the dried leaves of camphyr, that plant so noted in "the vineyards of Engeddi." Some think that the use of the dye is indicated in Deut. xxi. 12, and it is also said, that the Hebrews had the same custom; though it may be doubted, I think, how far this text warrants the supposition.

great dread; and their descriptions of them are very extravagant: they look upon them "as a demon, dragon, or a fiend of the desert; gigantic, frightful spectres, that devour both the living and the dead."

From what I could gather of the characters of the ladies of the harem, I imagine that Marmontel's description comes the nearest to any summary that can be drawn, viz. "Passant la moitié de leur tems à ne rien faire, et l'autre moitié à faire des riens." Though polygamy is sanctioned by the religion of Mahomet, and also the custom of secluding the female sex, the Koran permits only four *wives*; but there is no limit to the number of female slaves. This degradation of the fairest portion of God's creation, whom "man was born to please," tends likewise to the degradation of those who impose it.

Then the jealousy of these Persian lords of the creation! Perhaps, amongst no people is unfaithfulness to the nuptial tie more mercilessly punished than amongst the Mahomedans. At Constantinople, the guilty one is bagged immediately, the mouth of the sack being carefully tied over, and she is drowned in the Bosphorus. This is thought no more of than drowning a cat! In Persia, too,

they put them into a bag; but they are there thrown off some high tower, to their inevitable destruction. No trial by jury is necessary, no Doctors Commons; to be judged by their husbands and executed is short work. In this way several women were thrown from the top of the Ark, shortly before my last visit to Tabreez.

Sterility amongst the married ladies of Persia is deemed as great a reproach as in the days of Rachel and Hannah. The birth of a son is a matter of great congratulation. Presents are sent of dresses for the infant, with sweetmeats, fruit, &c. The daughters are but little regarded beyond the precincts of the harem.

Marriages in Persia are contracted by the parents, and the betrothment takes place at a very early age. The bridegroom is consequently spared the wooing and the winning, since this is all done for him by parental kindness. The courtship is performed by proxy; so also is the marriage ceremony. I was curious to learn how the contract was entered into, since the groom is never permitted to see his bride until three days after marriage. She is reported to him by some female negociator to be "more blooming than the rose,

more odoriferous than the violet, better formed than Hebe;" at which description "his heart becomes a coal, and his liver is dried up." He then contracts with her parents for the dower which he is to bestow on his wife. The contract being settled, a moolah signs it, and the ceremony soon after takes place, each party being within hearing at the time, but not visible. The service is short and simple. "I, N., the authorised proxy for you, M., do take L. to be his perpetual wife, for such dower as you have agreed upon." The other replies, "I, N., the authorised proxy for you, L., do take her for his perpetual wife, upon condition of the dower agreed upon by both parties." Some prayers are then read by the moolah, and he enquires of each of the invisible persons whether they agree to the contract. They answer in the affirmative, and he then declares them to be lawful man and wife. When the ceremony is at an end, the veil is thrown over the bride, which is brought for her by the groom; she is furnished with some aromatic seeds, which she must eat on arrival at the house of her husband, in order to have a sweet breath in his presence; a little camphor or rose-water is given her. The bride sets out on horse-

back for her new residence, accompanied by all her relations, who carry with them presents of sweetmeats. She then begins her poetic invocation—

> "Holy Prophet, grant, I pray,
> On this happy nuptial day,
> That my husband and his mother,
> Cousin, sister, uncle, brother,
> Sanction without stint or measure
> Every thing that gives me pleasure."

The feasting then begins, and continues for three days. With some great men it continues thirty or forty days, but with the poorest person never less than three days. The grade of society is much known by the time of keeping up this festival. Some extravagant and reckless persons have even spent their all on this festive occasion.

The occasional disappointment in this blindfold bargain reminds one of Rachel and Leah. No Persian would marry a woman that had been subjected to the gaze of other men. I knew an instance of a Khan that offered as much as a thousand tomauns to her father to be allowed to see his bride elect, which was refused. It is deemed absolute pollution. But under their veiled mystification, mistakes have sometimes occurred,

of marrying the wrong woman. "In the reign of Sultan Hassan, A.D. 1708, a proud Georgian chief sent to another chief, Meer Vais, to demand his daughter in marriage. The father being unwilling to give her up, and fearing to offend this great lord, substituted in place of his daughter a young girl who had been fostered in the house. The bride was received with all due ceremony, and installed as the wife of the proud Georgian chief." How his wrath developed itself when the *denouement* took place, the historian goes not on to show, confining himself to the fact of this marriage imposition.

I have understood that the marriage contract is a little speculative in most cases. There is one advantage, that in Persia marriages may be contracted for a limited period, from a week to a century; so that if any mistakes arise, they may soon be obviated. Dower is a most important point in the Persian marriage contract; and as the husband pays instead of receiving it, he thereby makes an absolute purchase of his wife.

Where the harem is on a large scale, such as the royal establishments, it is said to be a most extraordinary theatre of duplicity and intrigue. A

female having once passed its threshold has quitted the world for ever; no other male than her lord (and the eunuchs) will ever see her again; she is immured for life. The Mahomedans are bound to make liberal provision for their fair prisoners, and as I have already noticed, this forms a considerable part of the royal expenditure.

So jealous are the Persians respecting their women, that the harems are built in such a way as to render it impossible to overlook them from the most elevated positions. From the principal entrance of the great man's house branch different courts; so that the "harem kaneh" is perfectly distinct. Even our English "khanum" was similarly lodged in her own apartments. She always wore the "chadre," or veil; and so, indeed, did the English ladies at Tabreez. When I proposed paying her a visit at the "harem kaneh," her reply was, "I should be very happy to see you myself, but your appearance would produce an *emeute* amongst my female establishment." She received her friends always in the Khan's apartments, which, as I have observed, were established pretty much *à l'Anglaise.*

What shall I say of Persian beauty, completely

veiled as it is from the public gaze? The English "khanum" used to give me most fervid descriptions of it, with comparisons about the gazelle, "the antelope eye," and so forth. I will on this point quote a little from one of their own authors, whose etherial descriptions of woman are so fervid, so unsubstantial, so sunny, so feminine, that I shall be excused for this brief extract.

"Who would care to die, to be pillowed upon the silver couches of clouds in the purple-aired Paradise, while the dark-eyed daughters of the Paradise of Eden bent over him! Beauties with eyes soft as the gazelles to watch his slumber, and awaken him with the babbling honey of their voices! Beings whose long lashes arch like the stem of a wild blossom when it stoops to kiss the river! Oh, let me die and be carried to the pearly abodes of the Peris! When I am wearied, let them lull me to slumber by their murmuring kisses! Let me dance with them on beds of undying flowers, to the singing of celestial birds, in a land where the trees murmur in music so soft that the sound seems distilled, and only the sweetest is borne along the fragrant air, not harsher than the silver note of the low voiced seraphim.

Or let me live among them on some flowery island in a far off ocean, where there is no night; nothing but the waving of roses, and the sound of sweet bells, the low murmuring of the ocean, and the flapping of white birds' wings, their own soft words dropping with gentle cadences. Oh! I would nestle in the midst of them like a bird; they should sit in a circle, and form my nest. I would have no sighing, nothing but a dreamy exchange of looks — the slow, deep current of indolent delight."

In closing my account of the domestic life of Persia, I must remark that it appears to me any thing but that "home" thus beautifully described by the poet:—

"———————— the resort
Of love, of joy, of peace; where,
Supporting and supported, polished friends,
And dear relations, mingle into bliss."

CHAPTER V

JOURNEY FROM TEHRAN TO ERZROUME.

A SLIGHT Itinerary of the journey from Tehran to Erzroume may be useful to travellers.* This was my second visit to the capital of Persia. I had exhausted all it had to offer of entertainment—its bazaars, gardens, baths, &c., and was filled with new-born expectations of revisiting Ferengistan.

On the 23rd of August we started for Sulimania, which was my favourite place, already alluded to. Our party was increased by Baron Hyter, a Polish nobleman, whose occasional gaieties sometimes amused us, whose eccentricities injured us, and whose *triste* reminiscences of his

* See Appendix.

father-land grieved us. Thrown suddenly on the wide world to seek a home and the means of existence, unacquainted with any profession but that of war, Persia was the only part of the world that offered any scope for his professional pursuits —the Prince being then marching against his rebellious subjects in Khorassan, and a countryman of the Baron's, Borosky, being then similarly engaged, who was deemed the "lion of the camp." The Adjemies were astonished at this officer's impetuosity, which at the siege of Herat in 1836 cost him his life.

The Baron Hyter arrived at Tabreez in the spring of 1833, destitute and friendless; but having a letter of recommendation from the British Consul-general at Constantinople to Dr. Cormick, he was hospitably entertained by him, and sent on to Tehran, and from thence to Khorassan, at the expense of the British Elchee. He sought the Prince's service, and was immediately engaged, at two hundred tomauns per annum, and an outfit of carpets, forage, &c.

His trusty sword in his scabbard was the only remaining patrimony of the poor Baron, and it might have been imagined that he would scarcely

draw it against his own countryman; but, "jealous and quick of honour," of a fiery and untameable temper, his fighting propensities were uncontrolable, and in the course of three days he chose to quarrel with Borosky, and challenged him with pistols across the table at the short shot! Borosky complained to the Prince, and the Baron was discharged with a present of a hundred tomauns for his services.

Under these circumstances, he requested the Khan to be allowed to join our party to Tabreez, which was immediately assented to. Wayward and spoiled, adversity never seemed to have chastened him to any purpose; the old leaven would occasionally break out, much to our discomfort, always to his cost. "I like not this"—"I like not that"—when he had neither food to eat, nor the means to purchase any! I was much amused at his angry independence. Nothing would please him, and the Khan did his utmost even to humour his waywardness, much to our inconvenience. He was always at cross purposes; he would occasionally branch off the road, and gallop on in a different direction, that we might have to wait his return, or be at the trouble to send for him. He was fighting his way, as it were, always in arms, and

comported himself with a haughty dignity, as though his exchequer were overflowing, when at the time he had not a week's supplies. All this was accompanied by an agreeable sort of humour, which caused us more amusement than anger.

From Tehran to Sulimania, the extensive road is, as it were, studded with villages; the melon grounds are extensive, the khenauts complete. I may observe that the best melons in Persia are grown at Ispahan, the principal manure being pigeons' dung. In this the plant seems to riot, and throws out fruit and branch with great prodigality. They build towers for pigeons, in order to husband this manure.

At an early hour we quitted the royal residence for Zakiabad, a new line of road, which we adopted in order to procure better pasture for our numerous cattle. This village abounded with that great source of Persian riches—water. The roads at this time were rather difficult and dangerous from banditti; the way was dry and thirsty, and our water-bottle had been spent in the desert. The khenauts had disappeared, so that there was no chance of replenishing our store. The sun-burnt peasants, stalking over the sands, looked misery

personified. Some had donkey-loads of the water-melons, of which they eat so many. Immense plantations of this fruit we found wherever there is a means of irrigation.

Thus we lingered on our way, aching on the saddle for a new position; our Baron occasionally enlivening us with his Polish airs, and every now and then breaking into bursts of laughter: for his temper was as strongly tinctured with comedy as it was with sadness. Of an ancient family, and accustomed to every luxury, by the fortune of war he had experienced the most dreadful reverses. At the late insurrection of the Poles against Russia, his family took a distinguished part; at the siege of Warsaw his father and brother fell in the breach at his side, and he had just time to escape the captivity which awaited him in Siberia. He was personally proscribed; his estates were confiscated, his mother and sisters scattered no one knew whither; and as he touched on these tender points, he seemed to contend with a whirlwind of feelings. We gave him a tchibook, however, and in five minutes after he was singing his favourite air of "Moy Zister."

On the fourth day we reached Siadeen, at an

early hour, and here we were sheltered under the broken roof of a tenement, the rafters of which had been taken out by the soldiery for fire-wood.

Thence we proceeded to Korem Dereh. This "happy valley" I have already spoken of as having afforded me so luxurious a resting-place; and occupying once more the little "bauleh kaneh," I felt quite at home as it were: rather a strange feeling on Persian soil! But so it was:—the people were kind; I smoked with them the pipe of recognition, and fraternising amongst my old acquaintance, I gave myself up to much enjoyment, although so transient.

At another village where we sought to breakfast on the road, there was no bread to be had. The impatient Baron could not understand this, and, pistol in hand, he went in amongst the villagers, declaring he would shoot them if they did not feed him. We had the greatest difficulty to prevent bloodshed, and were, moreover, effectually prevented from obtaining that which we might have procured by treaty. Hungry and tired, we marched off, really dreading the *emeute* of the villagers.

At the next station we were invited by the Ketkodeh to breakfast with him. He gave it us

in good Persian style, and was much amused at our rough reception at the last village. The kalleon being brought in, of course the first whiff was offered by the servant to his master; for many of the Persians will not smoke after the pipe has been contaminated by the touch of a kaffir, or infidel. On this up starts our irascible Baron, declaring he had been insulted by the pipe not being offered to him *first*; he said he was always accustomed to this courtesy at home, and would not brook its absence. Then buckling on his armour, he made hasty preparations for his departure, and the Khan had the greatest difficulty in appeasing him.

At Sultaniah we luckily got rid of the Baron; his impatience would not put up with our slow travel;—he took post-horses and proceeded to Tabreez. We were not sorry to lose our choleric, though occasionally amusing companion.*

Oh! the misery of travelling under the influence

* I encountered the Baron Hyter again at Constantinople; he was living at a good hotel, "sans moyens, mais pas sans frais." Most hearty was his recognition; he was as usual gay and *triste* in turns; the laughing and the tears were mixed up together; it was difficult to say which prevailed. Drawing his trusty blade, which seemed to be his only solace, he said he was about to wield it in the cause of the youthful Queen Isabella, Spain

of fever and ague! from which I suffered during the journey through the villages of Deezeh, Armakaneh, and Arkand, to Sheik der Abaud, the Khan's territory, of which I have before spoken. I here left him behind to arrange his affairs with the Ketkodeh, and proceeding alone to Sooma, a wretched village, with scarcely a stable to be found in it, I made my way to Hadji Agha, and reposed in the same place, and on the same mat, where our English smelter had, a short time before, breathed his last.

What a weary desolation comes over the mind in so distant a land, at the mournful recollection of a countryman, so far from his native soil, and all the sympathies of family and friends, departing, to use his own words, for that bourne, "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." Exhausted by fatigue, and worn down by illness, I was very glad to resume my little bauleh kaneh at Tabreez, where on my mat of repose I found some relief from diarrhetic inquietudes.

being at that time the only land where warriors could exercise their profession. At my last visit to Persia, I enquired about him, and was told that, invited by the Russian amnesty to return to that country, he went to Odessa, and there blew his brains out.

Here I rested for a month, amidst grievous attacks of quartan ague. The Baron, I found, had duly arrived, and was hospitably entertained by one of the British residents; but his fighting propensities were by no means subdued; for some presumed offence he challenged his benefactor, who had too much liberality to turn him into the streets for his ingratitude.

During this time I passed many an anxious day and night on my couch, disease grasping me as its victim. I made, however, at last, a strong effort to resume my journey, feeling that my recovery there was almost impossible. I combatted with my disease, and sprung desperately into my saddle, although, only an hour before, I had been prostrated by a shaking fit, which seemed to be an entire prohibition to travel.

I felt melancholy and dispirited at taking leave of Tabreez; I was getting attached to the soil and to the people; even the scallopped mud walls brought me some pleasing associations. With difficulty, and on horseback, I revisited my old haunts, the gardens, the bubbling brooks, the noontide shades, which in a grove of poplars was my favourite resort. The servants to whom I had

been so accustomed were endeared to me by their prompt attentions—waiting on your looks, anticipating your wants, with their tchibook always ready. All these recollections were endeared to me by ties which I found it painful to sever.

Taking leave of Tabreez on the 10th of October, I wended my silent way quite alone (that is, with two attendants only). My solitude gave me ample scope for my Persian reminiscences, which were often of a painful nature. It was still intensely hot, although so late in the season; frosty mornings and noontide heat.

I shall not tarry amongst the villages: that of Tassooch is one of the richest in the district. The shaking fits came on every alternate day at noon, when I was obliged to alight; the nummed was spread on the ground, wherever I might happen to be, and I was stretched upon it, clothed with all possible warmth; the fire was kindled on the sands, the water heated, and given me copiously (the only remedy used to allay the attack), and my patient attendants, hanging over me watching my looks, sometimes seemed to think that they might be called upon to bury me on the soil which seemed to "yawn a grave."

With much difficulty did I at length reach the city of Khoe, where, harboured in my friend Meerza Rezza's house, I found an agreeable respite from my toils. My respectable host, though not at home, had provided for my reception; and the ladies of the harem sent frequent enquiries as to my health and comfort, sending at dinner-time a tray from their own kitchen, cooked for my especial use, to suit my invalid appetite. From those kind ladies, however, I could never get a friendly visit, and the idea of my visiting them to return thanks was scouted by Gul Mahmoud, to whom I made an indirect proposal to that effect. "Mimkun nist Sahib," it is impossible; "but they have seen you, and are constantly enquiring as to your health, comforts, &c."

In this way, at second hand, many civilities were passed between us; they sending me fruit and pilaff, and I returning them penknives and scissors. The traveller, by the bye, should be always supplied with some trifles in the way of "peiscush," or presents.

Here I remained eight days, being unable to proceed, on account of exhaustion. Wearied in every joint as I lay on my mattrass, I would some-

times scramble upon the terraced roof to smoke my tchibook, or to drive away the cats which infested it. I have a great antipathy to these animals, which amused my Persian domestics much. Whenever they wanted to arouse me from my mat, they would cry out, "Gourbah sahib," —"here is the cat!"

Being at length sufficiently recovered to resume my long and weary journey, the most frightful reports were brought in, that the Koords were infesting the frontier. Robberies and murders were the natural result. Muleteers were constantly arriving with alarming gazettes; and it was deemed very dangerous for me to go on alone. Gul Mahmoud began to show the white feather whenever I talked of moving, always reminding me with his "Inshallah"—"if God please."

As I lay one day ruminating and cogitating on what was to be done, he brought me sudden intelligence that Pasha Khan, an envoy from the prince, was soon to leave for Erzroume, with a considerable escort; furthermore, that having heard of a Ferengee stranger being about to travel on the same road, he had offered that I should join

his party, and that he would take care for my accommodation. I sent my salaams of acknowledgment, with all the Persian compliments of which I was master, saying that I would wait upon him to offer them personally, but that I was too ill to leave my mat.

Gul Mahmoud soon came back, charged with ample complimentary returns, adding, "The Khan does not expect you to go to him, but he will shortly pay you a visit." No sooner said than done, and in walked the Khan, with his scarlet robes and other finery, accompanied by a long train of servants. In my then debilitated state, I had some difficulty to give him a suitable reception. The Khan not speaking Persian, and I not understanding Turkish, Gul Mahmoud was our interpreter. Thus we bandied about the "chum y chum," or compliments, until my vocabulary was quite exhausted. The visit ended by the Khan's professing that he would start when it suited my convenience, would rest whenever I wished to rest, and so on; finishing with "Gholaum y shuma my shavan"—"I am your slave, and all I have is yours." It was finally arranged that he should depart from Erzroume on the following day,

and I promised to overtake him on the road, not being well enough for immediate movement.

On the 22nd October the roads began to crisp, from a sort of incipient frost; the wild ducks started up from the many streams we had to cross, and the geese fluttered in the air, mocking, us as it were, in their flight with their wild cry. This species of game is abundant, and offers an amusing variety to the monotony of Asiatic travel; but I was too ill to profit by the amusement.

With my faithful Gul Mahmoud (the "Rose of Mahmoud," according to the Persian vocabulary, though he was about the dirtiest fellow I ever saw), who served me as valet, cook, doctor, and what not, and who was a rigid Moslem, often keeping me waiting for my dinner whilst he was invoking the Prophet; and Meshedee Hassan, my "mater," or groom, taking in charge my sundry baggage of pipes, kettles, carpets, and tobacco; with these two companions I set forward to overtake the Khan.

I found him established in a pretty "bauleh kaneh," at the village of Ali Shah, his numerous suite around him, and the Ketkodeh in attendance, waiting to bask in the sunshine of his coun-

tenance. I have before observed, that in these rude countries the natives think much of the title of Elchee, or envoy; for not only do they feel honoured at such visits, but they hang on their breath, as it were, every thing being placed at their disposal.

The Khan received me graciously, enquired for my health, and gave immediate orders for a stable being cleaned out for my reception. Having made my salaams, and acknowledged his bounty, the Ketkodeh led the way; I followed, horses and all, and we got comfortably domiciled together for the night. Early the next morning the Khan summoned his followers, and I fell into the train; but nothing would do but I must keep at his left hand, which is the station of dignity, and where, by the aid of my dragoman, Gul Mahmoud, we kept up a pretty good colloquial intimacy. He was very inquisitive, as are all the Persians, as to my motives for travel, my opinion of Persia, and the thousand and one questions of my father-land, about which they are very curious. He had heard of our travelling by *steam*, which he could not comprehend, they having no word in their language to express it. I was doing my best at ex-

planation; but whether it lost in the translation, or for what reason I do not know, but in order to exemplify it, I gave a whiff from my tchibook*— when off galloped the Khan; he was too polite to say he disbelieved me, so he thus cut the thread of my discourse. He never afterwards resumed the subject.

It is a very pretty sight to see a party of Persians on horseback: they manage their steeds with much dexterity; pull them up at full gallop in a moment; throw the rein on their neck and fire in the air, seldom missing their bird. On these extensive plains they have full scope for their exercises. The horse snorts and foams, and enjoys the sport equally with the rider.

The Persians are perfectly at ease on horseback. While continuing his gallop, the Khan would load his gun, fire, and always bring down his game. In this way a great many birds were killed on the road, by the Khan and his numerous suite. At the different stations they were always brought and laid at my feet, with the Khan's "bismillah," or welcome. He thought it better for me than

* Smoking on horseback is one of the greatest luxuries of Asiatic travel.

the common village food, and seemed quite as anxious about my health as I was myself. He always enquired how far I would like to go the next day, and wherever I would appoint a place, there he would always rest. His kind attentions were quite overwhelming; for although, while travelling together we never occupied the same stable, at our stations, the moment I was housed, came his "peish khidmet," in long scarlet robes, to enquire for my health, charged with numerous courtesies from his master; and sometimes the Khan would come himself, to arrange our journey for the following day.

I like to recount these Persian courtesies, since from a true believer to an infidel, as they call us, there was a humanity in his kindness; and I had no sort of claim upon it by previous introduction or acquaintance.

Nothing but an ague fit, or extreme debility, now stopped me on the road; this, however, happened every other day; and when the shaking fits came on, in a moment the whole cavalcade was stopped, and they patiently waited my recovery, sometimes for two hours; and on making my excuses, they would say, "Allah karam"—"God

is great!" "Inshallah"—"if it please God!" for the Mahomedans attribute all things, be they good or evil, to the mercy of Allah.

At Kereney the Khan left me, having appointed where to meet again; he had to pay a visit to a neighbouring Koordish Pasha, whose friendship it was desirable to cultivate, he having much influence on the predatory tribes. The Khan's mission to Erzroume was relative to some Koordish tribes on the frontiers, who belonged to Turkey, but had made their irruptions into Persia. This is a frequent subject of diplomatic intercourse and angry strife between the two countries.

Here, on my solitary mat, I had full time to ruminate on my travelling adventures, finding myself quite alone on the wild Asiatic soil, a prey to disease, wasting by fatigue, with only Mahomedans for my guides, and the banditti for my neighbours, and at times feeling some gloomy forebodings that I should never more reach Ferengistan.

One of the Koords came over to pay me a civil visit; he had heard of the arrival of a Ferengee stranger, and probably came to reconnoitre how far he was worth pouncing upon. He looked very

hard at me, my arms, the domestics, &c., and I offered him every civility of tchibook, coffee, &c., always the best way when you expect to be robbed; it tends, in some measure, to weaken the evil design. I had some experience in this way at Maliz-Ghird. Gul Mahmoud took care to tell him, as he went away, that I was travelling with Pasha Khan, who was gone to pay his chief a visit. To this probably I owed my safety.

On the following day, when passing through the Koordish camp unmolested, even unquestioned, I met the Khan again. I had a long and dreary ride of it over a mountainous district, bare of verdure, wood, or water; there seemed to be nothing to sustain animal life; no beast grazed, no bird soared; the very heavens looked dark and unpropitious. The sombreness of my solitude on this occasion is too deeply impressed upon me to be easily forgotten. At Avajek, the frontier village between Persia and Turkey, I met again the full-blown chief whose acquaintance I had made before, and a warm stable was cleared out for myself and cattle.

I always like to recognise old localities, and having passed this way so many times, I went to visit some ruins, hitherto but cursorily examined.

The remains of a large mosque formed the prominent object of interest at this village, which was well watered, and consequently rich in produce. The people were fierce-looking mountaineers, they being Koords, to keep the neighbouring Koords in order; but I saw nothing of those who had formerly formed my escort. I joined the Khan's party the next morning, and we started for the mountains.

The wild features of this rocky district I have already alluded to. Some of the natives joined our party, more for protection than convoy; but we had no adventures, beyond that of seeing a Koord bearing away a lamb which he had stolen from a neighbouring flock. Some of our party held parley with him; but he laughed at their charging him with the theft, and said that the roads were clear for our passage.

I am always amused with these grotesque looking Koords, bedizened with their gay turbans and flowing streaky robes. (the abba being generally white or camel-colour streaked with black), looking fiercely proud, and, amidst their poverty, assuming an air of the utmost importance. The Khan would every now and then summon us

together, to examine into the state of our fire-arms, if the pistols were primed, &c.; thus indicating that probable danger which gives so much interest to Asiatic travel.

Occasionally the Koords of our party would set up their most savage sounds of discordant music, which the dells echoed back again. This was a challenge, as I took it, to the banditti in their fastnesses; but it failed to draw them out. One or two occasionally looked on and reconnoitred our party, but on being told that it was Pasha Khan, the name seemed to operate magically upon them, and to scour the country of all intruders.

The approach to Byazide, the frontier Turkish town, was very magnificent. It is seated on the cone of a hill, and seemingly inaccessible. This place had been taken possession of by the Russians, and was garrisoned by them in the winter of 1828, when I first passed that way. Now it was free from the invaders, and I found a tolerably good lodging at the house of an Armenian, known to Gul Mahmoud.

Being too ill to proceed the next day, I was just able to reconnoitre a little of this singular-looking place. The Pasha's palace is the most prominent

object, from its elevation at the top of a craggy hill. The whole place looks sun-burnt, and I could discover but very little verdure. The Pasha was absent, Koord hunting. Being himself one of the tribe, he was deemed very expert at the game —so much so, that it gained him his pashalic.

Byazide is principally inhabited by the Armenians. The houses are small and hovelly, as in most Turkish towns, and the more I surveyed it, the more singular did its position appear, whether from choice or necessity I could not make out. Its original founder was Bajazet, whose cruelties are so strongly depicted in Turkish history. The scenes of many of them are laid at this place. The dungeons of the palace are among its prominent features; and it is a singular fact, that an European was incarcerated in them some thirty years ago—M. Jaubert, a Frenchman, who was on his way to Persia. He was kept here for eight months; and was at length emancipated by the aid of a female. It was quite a romantic affair, as I have heard it detailed by that gentleman's sister.

Wearied and worn out, disease again prostrated me on my mat, and I was obliged to take a day's repose. The good Khan was patient and attentive

to my wants, and sent his people to know my pleasure about proceeding. I was really too ill almost to receive them, and I pressed their going on without me. This he would not hear of, and professed his willingness to wait almost any time that I might require to recruit my exhausted strength.

Being anxious not to intrude on the Khan's time any longer, with much difficulty, on the following day I got into my saddle, and we made an eight hours' march to Diadin. I had passed over this ground so frequently as to make me indifferent about the landscape. It is in the immediate vicinity of Ararat, and I have always noticed that it bears a sort of lava appearance, evidently volcanic; and so sterile is this rocky surface, that the browsing of a goat or the feed for a camel might be sought for in vain. The lofty mountain has been so often described by travellers, that I need not dwell on it. These rocky passes are deemed favourable for a lodgment of Koords, since they are so narrow that the mules must proceed by single file. Whilst so doing, the Khan exercised his vigilance, causing scouts to look out; but we were not annoyed.

Here again I was attacked by my merciless ague on the road, and obliged to lay by on my carpet, spread out, as it were, on the great highway of the world, in the midst of Moslem strangers! The Khan seemed to compassionate me very much,—which was all he could do beside ordering his train to stop. There is something soothing in human sympathy, alleviating to almost all calamities; but to receive this in the desert, far from country and friends, is doubly gratifying.

It was amusing to hear, the moment I stopped, the report bruited through the ranks, "Sahib nakoosh ast,"—"the Sahib is ill." Immediately the beasts were stopped, and it seemed to throw a gloom over the whole; there was evidently a general sympathy of feeling. Sometimes it was, "Sahib kali bad ast,"—"the Sahib is *very* ill;" and then I fancied they were looking out where to dig my grave.

At Diadin the accommodations were very wretched. The Khan did his utmost to procure me better, though without success; but his courtesy did not extend to inviting me into his own stable; for, with all his real kindness, there was always that strict line of demarcation kept up

which is prescribed by the Moslem's law, "the Jumah Abassi," towards the ghiaours or infidels, which never permitted me to lodge with them, much less to put my hand in their dish. The Peish Khidmet came with his many salaams, but I must shift for myself, since his numerous suite occupied all the best stables; such shiftings were sometimes rather precarious.

To Mongresor, the next day, was an affair of eight hours, with nothing particular to mark the way. Our road lay over extensive plains and stagnant marshes, out of some of which the Khan's valuable horses were rescued with some difficulty. At this season of the year the road becomes treacherous, and there are many places where man and beast are in danger of being swallowed up in the quagmire. The Khan had some led horses of great beauty, one of which I inadvertently admired. Such admiration was dangerous; it was mine at once; not a word of objection must be made; and I had great difficulty to back out of the accepting it—pleading that being on my way to England, it would quite inconvenience me to have a horse; that I had one already, which I meant to leave behind, &c. The bounteous Khan

would scarcely be put off; he offered to dismount from his own horse if I preferred it, and it taxed all my Persian eloquence, politely but positively, to disembarrass myself from his liberality. The civilities of the Persians become sometimes an incumbrance, and one is more puzzled to ward them off than to do so by their *in*civilities.

On the following morning we progressed to Kushuk-Kuy, a six hours' ride, and as this was "sick day" with me, I was kept on the road for some time, whilst the Khan amused himself with the "chasse," in which he was very successful. The game in this country is uncertain, sometimes abundant, sometimes scarce. Wild geese and ducks seem to abound, and there are occasional flocks of bustards, or wild turkeys; but these are very difficult to come at.

This village was very rich, from the alluvial soil surrounding it, called "Karch Chummum," or black meadow, from the richness of the ground. It is a pretty sight of an afternoon to see the contented villagers driving in their numerous flocks and herds, which must all be housed. They form a sort of pastoral family, man and beast, and seem fond of each other. Then the trusty dogs—

so faithful, so sagacious—hemming them within bounds; barking, but not biting.

I have often been turned out at the arrival of the cattle; for they must be lodged whatever may become of the rest, and the clean stalls prepared for their reception, bespeak how much they are thought of in the village family. The children clean them, the women caress them. All this confirmed the idea which I had previously formed of pastoral life in its aboriginal simplicity.

At Toprach Kaleh I paid my respects to Bahool Pasha, to seek escort; and the next morning proceeded towards the Armenian village of Moolah Suliman, only two hours off; but I was too ill to reach it, and the accommodating Khan rested on my account. I found pretty good lodgings, and an abundance of supplies. The Armenian villages are generally the richest in point of produce: although a comparatively idle people, they are more industrious than the Mahomedans. Here I stretched myself pretty comfortably on my mat: the gaping villagers offered me much tacit consolation,—looking all sympathy. Meantime the Khan and his suite amused themselves by shoot-

ing in the marshes; an abundance of game was brought to me; and, by way of change, he ordered a lamb to be slain, the best part of which was laid at my feet, with every look of sympathy from his numerous servants.

The next day we proceeded to Dehar, a very mountainous district, and where the village was of the most wretched description. I did at length make my way into a dark and dirty stable, the cattle having been previously ejected from it to make way for me. The mountains were covered with snow, and the gorges through which we passed were so narrow and slippery, that we had considerable difficulty with the baggage-horses. This was deemed a resort for bànditti, although we saw none. The usual precautions were not neglected to prevent a surprise. The Khan was a wary traveller; he seemed to have much knowledge of the Koords.

"Mine host" of the stable had a particularly sweet tooth. It might be that he had never before tasted of the juice of the cane; for he attacked my sugar-bag with a most wasteful pertinacity. To refuse him might have been dangerous to the

whole of my stock, so I yielded to his demands with that courteous simulation sometimes so necessary in the journey of life.

The next day we reached Cumasoor, a large village on the other side of the Araxes, over which a shattered bridge gives but a precarious transit. On crossing the river, I felt as it were at the termination of my journey, it being but two stations from Erzroume; and a sort of home feeling came over me, though so far from my mother-land. Here a comfortable stable housed me from a smart shower, and the Khan hoisted an umbrella, an article of very recent introduction into this country.

We met a part of the Turkish army, that was about to scour the country of the Koords, who were hovering about in all directions. This was the *avant garde* of Hussein Pasha, and such a rank and file as completely puzzles description;—bare-legged, badly slippered, armed and unarmed, grotesque in appearance, but like all Asiatic troops, fierce and menacing, and with wretched appointments of all sorts.

At Hassan Kaleh the town was crowded with these raw troops. The Khan now went off to visit the Pasha. His mission from the Prince,

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governor of Khoe, was to Hussein Pasha; and here I lost sight of him. It was impossible to obtain even stable accommodation when the town was so crowded with the military. Many efforts were made, and we wandered about the break-neck streets for more than an hour, unsuccessfully. At last, heartily tired, I gave the word to advance to the next village, Alvar, a wretched place—superlatively so even for Turkey.

The following day, at three o'clock, I was gladdened with the sight of the British arms over the door of the consulate, which was immediately opened to me by its hospitable inmate. Here my horse was littered, and I was myself bedded. This, after twenty-five days of fatigue and illness, was a most agreeable respite; but I was soon again prostrated with ague and fever, even worse than ever. No medical aid could be obtained; the kindness of my host was the only alleviation, and this was unbounded. I took care the next day to send a letter to the Khan at Hassan Kaleh, written in Turkish, with all the acknowledgments I was master of, for his unbounded kindness, sending him my address in London, which he wished particularly to have, saying that

he would be glad to hear of my safe arrival; and with this missive, I made up all that I could procure in the way of "peiscush," or presents, as some return for his bounty. I received a most gracious reply, full of condolences, assurances, &c., altogether characteristic of one of the kindest, and most benevolent of the human family I had yet met with.

I have a very favourable impression of the Adjemis, and am convinced that when (if ever) they shall be emancipated from the terrors of their present mode of government, and not obliged to exercise that simulation which is so interwoven in the web of Persian society, they will prove themselves generous, brave, and humane. I have met with invariable kindness from all classes; they possess fine elements of character, the evil features being the result merely of their despotic government.

Of Erzroume, the ancient capital of Armenia, I shall say but very little. The herds of dogs which infest it exceed any thing I have elsewhere seen in the East, and their fierceness is positively dangerous. Some writers attribute the origin of this city to Noah himself; nay, there are inhabitants who declare that some of the original buildings

are existing which were contemporary with that patriarch. But I had no time to explore, and had, moreover, seen the place before. The dirty streets have generally large canals running through them, and are intersected with bridges. The flat roofs have crops of the long grass growing on them, enough to feed a donkey or a camel, though I do not recollect seeing any of those animals browsing on them. I passed eleven days here, and on the 11th November started for Trebisonde.

CHAPTER VI.

PERSIAN ISLAMISM.

WITHOUT making any pretensions to a formal dissertation on the Mahomedan faith, I will just glance at the superficial differences existing between the Shiahs and the Sunnites, the former being the Persian, and the latter the Turkish followers of Mahomet. The differences between these two sects are rather political than religious, and relate to the right of the Prophet's successors. The Prophet they call "Russool Allah," or the "deputy of God." Ali was his cousin, and was further related to him by his marriage with Fatima, his only surviving daughter. Ali was distinguished by his bravery, and is now called by the Persians

"the Lion of God." His party held that the apostolic office was hereditary; but his opponents contended that it must be determined by the will of "the company of the faithful."

Such was the origin of those feuds which so divided the early Moslems, and which to this day keep up such bitter enmity between the Turks and Persians. The Sunnites hold the Shiahs in great contempt; they call them Adjemis, and their country Adjemistan, or country of barbarians. This is an opprobrious term, as I have experienced in the bazaars and at Constantinople, where, when wearing my Persian cap, I have been frequently insulted with it.

Both sects are fatalists; but, as far as I have traced the respective characters of Turks and Persians, they are complete opposites, and most inimical to each other. A quiet patient resignation marks the former under every species of misfortune, plague, pestilence, or famine. Their motto is, "Allah karem,"—God is great; it is "kismet," or fate; and the Turk meets the mandate of despotism with the most cheerful acquiescence, embraces the bow-string, and yields to the Sultan's decree. The Persian is reckless and volatile, and

never satisfied with his lot, be it what it may. The Turk is remarkable for his sobriety of judgment, sedateness, and gravity. "To be as honest as a Turk," may be deemed an eulogium even for an Englishman; whereas, "to be as treacherous as a Persian," is often applied in reprobation. The Turk acts from principle; the Persian from expediency. The one never lies; he promises little, even after the most mature consideration. The other never thinks; promises every thing, performs nothing, and lies more from habit than immorality. Conscience never troubles the Persian, he jumps to conclusions; and as for trust and fidelity, he knows not the meaning of the terms. The Turk tells the truth, even to his own damage; the Persian only when it suits his convenience. The Turk overflows with the milk of human kindness; he is compassionate to the brute creation; his protection of the dogs, and even the gulls and porpoises of the Bosphorus, attests this; no one is allowed to destroy them. I cannot find this amongst the Persians, who are said to be cruel, revengeful, and reckless.

Such contrarieties arising out of the same religious doctrines (since they both equally respect

the Koran), form an anomaly in human character difficult to account for, and which I have never heard explained. They produce, however, strong religious hate between the two nations; and the Turks are more deeply imbued with it than the Persians, their religious feelings being more strict, and being more urgently inculcated by the moolahs.

This international hatred has been the cause of many wars between the two countries. The religious crusade was begun by Shah Ismael, a pretended descendant of Ali, the champion of the Shiahs, about the year 1600, against the Sultan Selim, who was the defender of the Sunnites, or "orthodox," as they call themselves. It was undertaken with all that frantic fury which so distinguishes superstitious warfare. Selim declared it to be a war of the true believers against the infidels, and that there was more merit in killing a Persian than in destroying seventy Christians.

In the first conflict of this war Ismael suffered a complete overthrow of his army. But the Persians have a high respect for the memory of this monarch; he having been ultimately victorious, they consider him to be the founder of the Shiah faith, and believe him to have been divinely

inspired. His reign forms a bright page in their history.

The Sunnites look down with open contempt on the Shiahs. The latter, whatever they may feel, are more guarded in showing it. I learnt at Erzroume, on my way through it in 1829, that at the Russian invasion of that city, the Persians were all doomed to be massacred; that they shut themselves up in their khans, and when any of them appeared in the streets they were fired at, and many of them killed.

To return to the origin of these religious feuds. Ali had distinguished himself by his zeal to the Prophet. The Koreish tribe had resolved to put the Prophet to death; but Ali took his place, and wrapped himself in his green cloak, whilst Mahomet escaped. From this time green became the Mahomedan ensign, and is now the royal banner to all his followers.

Omar was elected to succeed Mahomet to the caliphat. He was killed by an assassin, after reigning ten years. Othman followed, and reigned twelve years. He died in peace. By this time Ali had gained a great party of the Arabians, and was at length elected to the caliphat, not,

however, without being warmly opposed, particularly by Ayesha, the youngest wife of Mahomet.

Ali was assassinated during his devotions to the Prophet at the mosque, and Hassan, his eldest son, succeeded him, but only reigned for six months. The stormy time of his government induced him to resign it to Moswiyah, who became the founder of the Ommiades dynasty. For a long time afterwards the family of Ali was execrated by the Omnian Caliphs; but their party still insisted upon their right to the supreme power. This kept up hostilities even for two hundred years afterwards; and the last of Ali's descendants, who pretended to the caliphat, was born as late in the Hegira as 225.

This youth, at the age of nine years, was abstracted from his family in a most mysterious manner. This was never accounted for. The Shiahs say he was removed by God, on account of the wickedness of men, and that he is to appear again, as chief of the true faith, in the last days. As they have, therefore, on earth no visible Imam, the King of Persia reigns as his deputy. The Persians are so impressed with the idea of the return of Ali's son, that an impostor, who pro-

claimed himself as the lost Imam, at Teflis, not very long ago, made a great stir amongst the Persians, and occasioned some uneasiness to the government.

The Shiahs are not so numerous as the Sunnites; they comprise chiefly the Musselmans of India, and the Uzbek tribes of Tartary, in addition to the Persians. The Sunnites comprise all the Turkish regions, the Arabs both of Syria and Egypt, the Affghans, &c. They style themselves the "followers of tradition," as well as "the orthodox;" and the Shiahs they call "schismatics." Shiah implies a sectary of an opprobious character; but the Persians call themselves "the friends of Ali, the company of the just."

The Sunnites contend that the office of the caliphat is now vested in the Sultan of Turkey, who derives his right from Motavakhel Billah the Second, the last of the Abbasides who retained the title of Caliph;—hence that veneration and religious respect with which the Turks behold their sovereign. But the Persians contend that Ali and his descendants were the only lawful successors of the Prophet. These they call the twelve Imams; and their creed, the "Kelemeh

Islam," is the profession of the Mahomedan faith. Thus—"There is no God but God; Mahomet is the apostle of God, and Ali is the vicar of God;" acknowledging the latter to be the most excellent of men after Mahomet, next to whom they place his successors, Hassan and Hosseen. This feeling is kept up by the feast of the Moharem, or anniversary of the martyrdom of these two Imams, which is most religiously observed by the Persians. The feeling of the Shiahs regarding Ali amounts, with some of them, to idolatry. They invoke his name more than that of Mahomet; they even look on him as an incarnation of the Deity.

I have already testified to the Persian respect for their Scriptures, the Koran, which is an Arabic word, signifying "reading," or "to read." The Persians say of it, that "it was composed by God, and sent down from heaven by the Lord of all creatures. It is a book of infinite value; a revelation from a wise God. It is a copy from the original written in the preserved book in the volume of divine decrees in the seventh heaven. The Koran teaches that all men came into the world with a disposition to Islamism, and they only fall from it when becoming Jews, Christians,

or Pagans, by being badly taught. In the end of the world all shall be converted to their faith."

It is enjoined that none shall touch the Koran except they be clean, nor is it to be polluted by the touch of an unbeliever; and the good Moslem will wear it about his person—on either arm a part, and the remainder contained in small cases.

The Persians have a code of religious laws called the Jumah Abassi (already alluded to), independent of the Koran, inculcating minute observances, particularly in their intercourse with the kaffirs, or infidels, to whose "uncleanness" they feel an abhorrence. This code names also animals and things which are deemed unclean, of which the swine is the leading one. The hare is, by some, deemed unclean. Intoxicating liquors are forbidden; hence all true Mahomedans are most rigid Rechabites. There are some exceptions to this general rule, in Persia as well as in Turkey. The use of wine is rapidly increasing, and having once passed the rubicon, they drink to excess, saying there is as much sin in taking a glass as in taking a gallon.

Dead bodies of all kinds the Persians are for-

bidden to touch.* These laws are said to be so minute, that scarcely any one can understand them. But their grand rule of practice, as well as of faith, is the Koran. "Al Islam" means devotedness to God; "Iman" means faith.

There is something very imposing in the mode of Mahomedan worship, so far as I have witnessed it, both public and private. The former I once saw in a mosque in Turkey, which, at considerable risk, I ventured to visit during the service. The latter came before me on frequent occasions, and I observed, that whether on the journey or in the house, the good Moslem never fails in prayer to his God—bowing to the earth in religious homage, kissing the ground, and other demonstrations of deep humility, during all which they turn towards Mecca. In fact, they appear to be imbued with deep religious feeling; prayer and praise seemingly form the animus of their existence; and, upon the whole, I deem the Mahomedans, externally, more religious than any class of Christians I have met with. Of alms-giving, too, they are most liberal.

* Hagar says, "Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying, if one that is unclean by a dead body, touch any of them, shall it be unclean?" and the priest answered and said, "It shall be unclean."

In the usages of the Shiahs, I trace many assimilations to biblical customs, which make up much of the religion of Islamism. I discover, also, many of their doctrines to be founded on the Old Testament, but purged from the idolatry which, in the days of the prophets, so corrupted public worship; for the injunctions of the Koran are very strong against image-worship.

Astrologers have great influence over the Shiahs in their religious faith; nothing is done in Persia by shah or subject, of any importance, without first consulting these

> "Augurs and soothsayers, astrologers,
> Diviners and interpreters of dreams."

All great men have their own astrologers, whom they always consult on great events. On calculating nativities and foretelling events, these astrologers consult the planets. The lucky or unlucky moment must be pronounced by them, to commence a journey, or even to put on a new dress; and they generally find one to accommodate their clients, more particularly the Shah; for what are the stars, they say, to compare with "the cousin of the sun and moon?"

Sir John Malcolm relates many amusing anec-

dotes of astrology in Persia, in some of which, the constellations were rather unpropitious than otherwise. "Some years ago," says he, "when a Persian ambassador was about to proceed to India, he was informed by his astrologer of a most fortunate conjunction of the stars, which, if missed, might not occur again for some months. He instantly determined, though he could not embark, as the ship was not ready which was to carry him, to remove from his house in the town of Aburshir, to his tents, which were pitched in a village five miles from him. It was, however, discovered by the astrologer, that he could not go out of the door of his own dwelling, nor at the gate of the fort, as an invisible but baneful constellation was directly opposite, and shed its influence in that direction. To remedy this, a large aperture was made in the house; but that only opened into the neighbour's, and four or five walls more were to be cut through before the ambassador and his friends, which included the principal men, could reach the street. They then went to the beach, where it was intended to take a boat and proceed four miles by sea, in order that their backs might be turned on the dreaded constellation. But the

sea was rough, and the party he selected was encountering a real danger in order to avoid an imaginary one. In this dilemma, the governor was solicited to allow a part of the wall to be thrown down, that a mission on which so much depended, might not be exposed to misfortune. The request, extraordinary as it may appear, was complied with, and the cavalcade marched over the breach to their tents. The astrologer rode near the ambassador, that he might continually remind him of the great importance of keeping his head in one position; and, by his aid, he reached his tent, without any occurrence that could tend to disturb the good fortune that was augured to result from his having departed from home at the propitious moment. The ambassador's conduct in this instance, whilst it satisfied his own mind, met, no doubt, with the highest approbation of the court, and it gave confidence to his attendants; for the natives of Persia, from the highest to the lowest, have faith in this delusive science."

Sir John relates, that in his own case, before entering the gates of Tehran, it was suggested by his "mehmandar," that it would be proper to consult the astrologer for the lucky moment. He

complied with their superstitious desires, which conferred on his embassy the title of "the lucky mission." Even the reigning Shah, Mahmoud, durst not enter his capital without consulting the astrologer for the lucky moment, and he was delayed some time in the possession of empire, until that moment was indicated to him. Not to comply with these superstitious customs would be almost dangerous even to the despotic government of Persia.

It is usual when an infant is born of respectable parentage, for the astrologer to examine under the aspect of what star he was born, and according to the qualities of that star, he prognosticates what will be the character of the child, and whether he will be happy or miserable. He then writes the result of his calculation, and gives it to the parents. This is called "the theme of the nativity."

The astrologers are said to have predicted the assassination of the Russian ambassador and his suite.* Certain it is, that they were consulted with a view to ascertain what would be the consequences. They predicted that a most furious war with Russia would take place—that their troops would advance as far as Kasvine—but that they

* See Chap. 16, vol. i.

would be repulsed with great slaughter, and driven beyond the Caucasus; and that the King would reign seven years longer. This latter prediction was confirmed by his Majesty's special dream on the occasion.

I will close my slight sketch of the religion of the Persians, by reverting for a moment to what it originally was, and showing that they are at present in noon-day light, as compared with their primitive darkness. The sun was an object of worship with the ancient Persians; nor was it peculiar to this people, since it was the Baal of the Phœnicians, and the Moloch of the Ammonites. They were also Ghebres, or fire-worshippers. At Sari, in the province of Mazandaran, are still some remains of the Ghebre temples, built in the form of a rotunda, about thirty feet high, and bearing every indication of once massive buildings; and in the city of Yezd, there still exist some thousands of these idolaters. They were described to me as a quiet, industrious race, under the immediate government of their priests. The women do not clothe themselves with the "chadre," or veil, having none of that shamefacedness which I have already described. The men are a mean and poor looking race, such at least as I have seen.

The "everlasting fire," as they call it, still burns at Baku. It was visited by Dr. Schultz, the German *savant;* and he described it to me as being "a pale blue flame, which, when excited by the winds, blows as high as eight or ten feet, and for two miles around the earth is sufficiently hot to ignite coals. The flame emits a sulphureous smell, which, however, is not offensive." This is held in as great veneration by the Ghebres of the present day as it was by their ancestors. They hold that flame is a pure element, symbolical of God, and in paying worship to the symbol, homage is offered to the Deity.

It was Mahomet who rescued these idolaters from their darkness, and with fire and sword proclaimed that there was but one God, and Mahomet was his Prophet. The extraordinary success of Mahomet in establishing this faith over one-third of the inhabitants of the globe, in many portions of which he was permitted to trample on the Cross and to set up the crescent, is an historic fact beyond human reasoning and comprehension. But the immediate good resulting from it, was the entire extirpation of idol-worship amongst the Arabs.

CHAPTER VII.

PERSIAN FESTIVALS.*

THE Persian fête of the "Takieh" commemorates the martyrdom of the Imans Hassan and Hussein. They were the sons of Ali, and, according to the Shiahs' creed, the successors of Mahomet after their father. They are considered as martyrs, and this festival is kept up to remind the Persians of these memorable events, and to excite their hatred against the Sunnites, or Turkish Mahomedans.

The great Nadir Shah attempted to extinguish these fêtes. As one of the conditions of his accepting the crown, he ordered the discontinuance of the tumultuous meetings at the commemoration of Hussein's death. He did not, however, succeed in abolishing this festival.

* See Appendix.

I witnessed this fête in part, and will relate what I saw, and add to it the narrative of a most respectable witness. It takes place on the first ten days of the month Moharrem, being the first month of the Mahomedan year,* at which period, they say, the Koran in detached portions was sent down from heaven.

I have before alluded to the religious respect of the Persians for their scriptures, and their self-denying observance of the Ramazan; their further zeal I witnessed on this extraordinary commemoration, in the form of penances, self-inflicting degradations, and soul-felt grief—for so it appeared to me. During these days of mourning the mosques are hung with black, and the "maidans," or large squares, wherein the performance is to take place, are covered over with awnings. Here and there pulpits are placed, from whence the moolahs address the audience. The effects of these addresses are very powerful; the sobbings and groanings which take place are of the most boisterous kind.

A master of the ceremonies directed the *dramatis personæ* of the performance, the leading features of which appeared to be the sudden loss of a child

* Called by them "Ayam Almadoodant."

out of a cradle, which the angel was supposed to have carried up into heaven. This specimen of the winged seraphim by no means tended to exalt my notions of that order of beings. It was an uncouth looking female, or male disguised, appearing certainly to be any thing but etherial.

The women were particularly noisy in their grief; and I thought that, in many instances, it was not feigned. When, however, the angel brought down the infant again, the rejoicings were equally boisterous. The whole was a singing pantomime, if I may so say—and such singing! The ceremonies having lasted some hours, they were adjourned to the following day. Men ran through the city gashing themselves with knives, and howling and shouting out, "Hassan! Hussein!" the moolahs in their pulpits doled out their lamentations, which were responded to by the people with groans and tears; the men smote their breasts, at the same time laying them bare. These are the leading features of the mourning for the time. At other places they are excited by drums and trumpets. Every one assumes a dark garb, and their black caps and beards always constitute a sort of half mourning.

At Tehran, in the great court of the King's palace, the representations of the last few days take place, where the "shah zadehs," or princes, sometimes attend barefooted, and superintend the ceremonies, dealing about their sticks to keep order amongst the multitude. The family of Hussein is represented by men in women's dresses; and as the performances proceed to the dismal fate of the Iman on the plains of Kerbeleh, they utter dreadful shrieks and groans, and fill the air with their lamentations.

As I did not behold the whole of this festival, I will briefly relate an account furnished me by an eye-witness:—"The first part of the tragedy is the arrival of about fifty horsemen. The army of the Iman then appears in the square opposed to the Caliph Yezid. The battle commences. This is the moment of intense interest to the lookers-on. Hussein soon falls from his horse, and being covered with wounds, Yezid orders his head to be cut off. When the death blow is given by the executioner, the lamentations of the people increase; they fall upon the enemy almost with personal violence, so much so, that it is difficult to procure people to perform this part of the tra-

gedy. They then attempt to represent the dead bodies of the martyrs.*

"On the following day the tragedy continues. Yezid successively destroys the two children of Hussein, who had fallen into his power. Then comes a general procession of men carrying rich flags and banners of cachmere shawls, exhibiting a strange contrast with the poverty of the people in their black dresses. Some led horses, magnificently caparisoned, follow, their trappings rich with jewels and gold; then litters bearing figures of dead bodies, covered with blood and pierced with daggers, followed by naked bleeding men having scimetars and arrows apparently stuck into them, as though they had been pierced in battle. Succeeding these was a train of camels, mounted by men all in black, with female mourners throwing ashes over themselves and chopped straw.

"These hideous scenes are now varied by a pompous and imposing spectacle; some hundreds of

* It has been stated, that the executioner, in his extreme zeal to please the King, did on one occasion actually cut off the head of the man who performed Hussein. His Majesty, far from being shocked at the loss of a faithful subject, ordered the executioner to pay a fine of a hundred tomauns!—so good an opportunity of bringing money to the royal treasury was not to be forgotten.

men being employed in carrying on their shoulders two large mosques of wood, richly gilt and inlaid with mirrors, surmounted by minarets, in the galleries of which children are placed chaunting hymns, the effect of which agreeably contrasts with the mournful lamentations. Some moolahs, magnificently dressed, are seen in the interior, at prayers by the tomb of the Imans. This has a strange effect; and produces a most religious respect amongst the people. Then comes a model of the Kaaba, or Abraham's house at Mecca, which is richly ornamented with gaudy trappings. Hussein's war-horse follows, seemingly pierced with arrows, led by a slave, naked and armed with a battle-axe. After these appear angels and genii, being children having painted wings of pasteboard, in which they make a fine exhibition of etherials. Some hundreds of people close the procession, all in tatters, striking their breasts, crying out 'Ah wahi wahi,' and with every demonstration of 'afflicting their souls' by this mock tragedy.

"During the whole of this season of the Mohareem, it is deemed a time of mourning; the business and ceremonies of the court are suspended; and his Majesty appears in black. On the last day,

which is called 'Rooz Catl,' the grand performance takes place. The King superintends it from an elevated room in the maidan, and in some measure takes part in the performance; he gives 'a tear to guarantee the expression of his sorrow;' his subjects around him are obliged to do the same. The performers on approaching near the window smite their breasts, crying out 'Hassan Hussein! Hussein Hassan!' knocking each other violently with clubs. The procession is closed by the moolahs, bearing torches of yellow wax; the chief or 'Sheik ul Islam' stops a moment under the King's window, and implores a blessing on the 'Zil Allah,' or 'Shadow of God.' The crowd then disperse, and the court is broken up, heartily tired at these mummeries, which must be observed in deference to the religious prejudices of the Shiahs."

The Persians have an annual festival, which took place on the 8th of January, during my residence in the country, when almost the whole population of Tabreez poured out towards the tombs. The burying-grounds are very extensive around the walls of the city, and are unenclosed. The crowd pressed forward from all directions, and it was difficult to get out at the gates. At the corners

of these, and in the leading ways, were squatting down Koran readers, some of them dervishes, some moolahs, gratuitously giving extracts to the passing Moslems. I could scarcely restrain a smile at the various groups so grotesquely planted over the graves, weeping and wailing, some of them in the greatest apparent affliction. One of these groups particularly attracted my attention. It consisted of four women hooded in their "chadres," or veils, exhibiting a boisterous grief that appeared to be unappeasable. The grave-grounds were this day covered with the people of the city, all equally engrossed with sorrow, some of them steeped in tears; children and old men, females of all ages; Koran readers imparting, as it were, consolation to the bodies below, and giving them hopes of a joyful resurrection in good time. It was a novel sight; and there was something deeply affecting in the sobbings and weepings which in all directions met the ear.

These noisy tributes of woe in the morning are succeeded by feastings and rejoicings in the evening; the bazaars are gaily dressed up, and their contents put into requisition.

The Mahomedans think much of the quantity

of prayers which they may utter; thus when repeating the "fatheh," which is the most perfect form amongst them, they count their repetitions with the "tusbee," or rosary of beads, that of the King being of pearls. Kerbeleh, the mausoleum of the martyr alluded to, is deemed so holy a place, and so sacred an object of pilgrimage amongst the Shiahs, that they bring a piece of clay from it, which they place before them during prayers, pressing their foreheads upon it during their prostrations.

The fast of the Ramazan, already alluded to, is succeeded by a "bairam," or holiday, which lasts only one day; but the "Courban Bairam," or "festival of sacrifices," is seventy-two days afterwards, and is celebrated with much solemnity. It is intended to commemorate the arrival of the pilgrims at Mecca. This pilgrimage is an indispensable obligation on all good Moslems; they take from it the title of Hadji. If any thing excites the liberality of the Persians, it is to undertake this journey of piety, in which they are profuse in their expenditure, and prodigal of their time; some of them will even take two years to accomplish it. I once saw a party of these pilgrims set out, with

all the "pomp and circumstance" of floating banners, and splendid cavalcades, headed by the moolahs, triumphing as it were with their long train of devotees to the Prophet. The Koran dwells a good deal, in the sixth chapter, called "the Cattle," on the history and faith of Abraham, as the ancestor of Ismael, and of their appointing the holy house of Mecca to be a resort for mankind. "Verily, the first house appointed unto men to worship in was that which was in Mecca, the place where Abraham stood; and whoever entereth therein shall be safe; and it is a duty towards God, incumbent on those who are able to visit this house."

I saw nothing in Persia, when commemorating this festival of the "Courban Bairam," to compare with the pomp and parade of its celebration at Constantinople, where I have frequently witnessed it. A camel, richly caparisoned, is immolated by the prince or governor of the town, wherever it may be. A portion is reserved for the King and his family. At Tehran, it was formerly the custom for Majesty to strike the first blow at the victim. The inhabitants sacrifice lambs on the occasion, the greater part being given away to the poor.

New dresses are generally sported, and the people are prodigal with their "bughülgeeree," or embracing each other. They all take their "keyf," or enjoyment. The salaam takes place at the palace, and the rejoicings are second only to those of the "Ede y nü Rooz."

The "Ede y Kourban" takes place in September, to commemorate Abraham's sacrifice of his son Isaac. Immense quantities of cattle are slain on this occasion, and some of them roasted on the spot, pieces of which are presented to the people, and eaten with avidity. The great men of the cities and provinces slay a camel, and eat of its flesh at the place where it is roasted. This festival is thought but little of in comparison to the preceding.

In the south of Persia, about the middle of the month of June, they have a sort of festival in execration, as it were, of the Caliph Omar, by celebrating his death. They fix on a large platform an image, as deformed as possible, and begin to revile it, as having supplanted Ali, the lawful successor to Mahomet; and they attack it with stones and sticks until it is completely destroyed. This image is filled with sweetmeats, which are scattered to the mob who attend the ceremony.

CHAPTER VIII.

JAMALABAD.

This village, in the wild and uncivilized district of Karadagh, is situated on an eminence, commanding the view of a smiling plain below. Happiness and abundance seemed to reign here in solitary tranquillity. This solitariness is a peculiar feature of the unpeopled soil of Persia. The climate of Karadagh resembles more that of England than any I had known in Persia; changeful, with gusts of wind, and gleams of intermitting sunshine. The soil being watery is consequently fruitful; and many a pretty nook did I see, called "Gul Chy," or place of flowers, the surface of which was a blooming garden, untrimmed, uncultivated—the

tulip and the rose profusely scattered on a velvet turf. Here and there occurred a straggling village of most wretched aspect, the miserable inhabitants of which seemed to struggle, as it were, for existence; they appeared to be quite insensible to the beauties which surrounded them.

Some of these villages and natives were handed over to my friend the Khan, by Abbas Meerza; the natives were the most abject of their race. In this "ballook," or district of villages, I enjoyed the balmy breath of May, always on horseback, which gives an elasticity to the frame, and a buoyancy to the feelings, that must be felt to be understood. Then the ravenous appetite, which grows with the scarcity of food, and the hearty sleep on the hard ground! All these are natural delights, which I much prefer to the fictitious enjoyments of more cultivated life.

I contracted quite a regard for these wild aborigines. Where they are untainted by much intercourse with their fellows there is an original simplicity about them, but little removed from that of their camels and asses. They do nothing beyond what necessity dictates; they bask in the sun, sleep and smoke—smoke and sleep—thus whiling

away existence, negatively happy in their mud regions, which are of the most wretched fabric, built only for the day, and leaving posterity to take care of themselves; "Beings of yesterday and no to-morrow." Their large walled gardens, however, bespeak something like opulence, and the narrow entrances show the owner's mistrust of the government which protects him. A huge stone, about three feet high, is hung at one corner of the walls, which it is difficult to move on its heavy hinges to obtain ingress. This is to prevent surprise, and give the occupant time to prepare against attack. Every thing evinces jealousy, suspicion, and mistrust.

I wandered about to reconnoitre any interesting objects of the neighbourhood. The mill is generally the most attractive among them, and the only sign of industry and ingenuity. The stream is diverted to an overshot wheel; the impetuous torrent directing its force. The miserable huts containing all these contrivances to convert grain into flour are mud within and mud without, with the usual flat roof, and the machinery as simple as possible.

The Ketkodeh of this village was not at home,

so we occupied the bauleh khaneh overlooking the arid scene below, with seemingly much goodwill on the part of his servants. But matters were much changed about a month afterwards, on our return from Bahool. Hadji Cossim not being there, the servants refused to accommodate us as before.

To facilitate travel through this wild district, the Khan had been furnished by the Ameer y Nizam with a "mehmandar," or conductor, who bears the "sadir," or order for supplies of bread and barley for the whole party. This is the royal custom in Persia, as already alluded to, to furnish travellers with gratuitous supplies on the road, the value of which should be deducted from those revenues of the village which belong to government; but they never are: the sadir is therefore considered to be the most arbitrary imposition of the Persian taxes.

The Khan coming into the village, preceded by the mehmandar, and followed by his numerous train, we thought to have found the natives, as before, crouching before him, with "my eyes are enlightened at seeing you, and all I have is yours;" but no such thing, the mehmandar's order to pre-

pare the bauleh kaneh, and to send in provisions, was stoutly resisted, with the many opprobrious terms in which their language is so rich, and of which their tongues are so prodigal. I had just alighted from my horse, and on my return beheld the village presenting an arena of bloody strife, for a battle royal was raging between the villagers and the Khan's servants. Knives were drawn, bludgeons flying about (all the people are armed with knives in Persia, and a flash of anger produces an immediate show of steel); one man was prostrate, and another bleeding.

"Mount your horse on the instant!" said the Khan. "What is the matter?" said I. "Ask no questions!" and he galloped off, I after him. Every thing looked hostile, and apparently compromising our personal safety. The mehmandar was left for dead, whilst the servants and baggage were all behind, we knew not where. We galloped on for some time, the Khan seeming more alarmed than I had ever before seen him—not a word could I get from him, but "go on."

Our companion on this occasion "screwed his courage to the sticking-place," and, goading his horse with the shovel stirrups, he looked

"unutterable things" at me. He was a great bulky figure, a second Falstaff, his eyes starting out from under his Persian cap. I nearly tumbled off with laughing at his occasional glance at me, as if to enquire what was to become of us.

Our jaded beasts, having had a long day's march, now began to flag, and looking back, we discovered horsemen gaining rapidly upon us. "Forward!" was again the order of the day; our panting steeds reeked under whip and spur; the pursuers however gained upon us, so that there was no alternative but to stop and face them. Accordingly, the Khan ordered us into line, and to be ready primed for the encounter; our companion got into the rear, looking as fierce as his trepidation would permit.

"Salome alikome," said the foremost horseman when they reached us. This friendly greeting at once dissipated all fears, and we immediately came to parley. It appeared that Hadji Cossim had returned to the village just as we were retreating from it; and having ascertained the cause of the fray, and seeing the mehmandar lying bleeding on the ground, he became alarmed at this outrage on a government officer, so he instantly dispatched

his men to entreat the Khan's return, saying that from the ignorance of the people he had been so insulted. With "What dirt have these harem zadehs been eating? Come and make my face white—the bauleh kaneh is ready—I am your slave, and all I have is yours,"—with the thousand and one invocations so glibly mouthed by the Persians, invoking, in the name of Allah, the Khan's forgiveness. But all this would not do; the Khan was determined to go to the Ameer y Nizam, who was in camp not far off, and have the servants bastinadoed, and the ketkodeh degraded. He was known to be very inflexible, and this outrage upon his authority would never be overlooked.

The men implored, but the Khan went on; again and again they halted and entreated, and, at length, applied to me. I begged for their pardon, and was for returning to the village; but I could not divert the Khan's anger, so we journeyed on leisurely to the next village of Shah Bagy, where we found a tent prepared for our reception. One of our escort had preceded us, to make this preparation, being desirous to propitiate the Khan.

Whilst here enjoying our pipe of repose, and canvassing the late stirring events, the brother

of Hadji Cossim arrived. This was the guilty party; and he trembled before the Khan's anger, exclaiming, "Ah wahi,"—"what dirt has fallen upon my head! I am your sacrifice—pardon your slave." "Be chesm,"—"my eyes are yours." But nothing would do. "Vengeance!" said the Khan; and the arrival of the "mehmandar," with his bleeding head, and the wounded servants, with their report of the outrage, fed the flame of his resentment. They related "that for bread they gave them stones; to their demands for a resting-place they hoisted their bludgeons, drew their knives, and bled the servants of the Khan. The mehmandar they prostrated to the ground at one blow, the sadir or royal order for provisions they trampled in the dust, and braving them in their fury, every man would probably have been murdered but for the timely arrival of Hadji Cossim." The poor fellow knelt again at the Khan's feet—"Your slave is no better than an ass—I have eaten dirt—what film has covered my eyes. Aman aman. Mercy." "Shitaun-bud,"—"it was the devil, what had I to do it since I was only his agent?"—with a thousand other ingenious excuses.

We all pleaded for the delinquent—even M——

relented; so, at last, it was put down to the devil's account, and the Khan forgave him. The fellow was in ecstasies;—his toe-nails were safe, and he capered for joy. We then made a social meal of it; the pillau was served up rich in grease, and we squatted together in the strictest harmony. I should have preferred not to partake of it, but this would have looked inimical to friendship, so I bolted the pill of reconciliation, and smoked the pipe of peace.

The next morning we left Shah Bagy, being summoned by the charwardars at an early hour. These people conduct the caravan with a patient endurance of fatigue and privation, such as I have never seen in any other; with the monotonous toil of their daily life, following the beasts of burden, with the tinkling of the bells suspended to the leaders, making a foot travel of it for many hours; then having to clean the animals, with the sundry loading and unloading, mending the pack-saddles, occasionally taking a nap on the bare ground, the fierce sun drying up all their moisture; the cattle in the meantime cropping the herbage during the mid-day rest, or chewing the barley from out the "tobrah," or nose-bag, with which each mule is

furnished. There lie these charwardars basking, until the sun gives notice of retirement, when they resume the march under cooler auspices. On arrival at the station they measure out the barley, arrange the loads for the night's bivouack and clean the cattle. *They* are the last thought of or cared about, even by themselves; and yet withal they are cheerful and happy, and if they can get a mess of "moss," or sour milk, supremely so; if not, with their barley bread and a smoke, they are easily contented, and their sound sleep may be envied by a monarch.

In this way they will march for a month the same monotonous routine; some journies take double this time. I have noticed them sometimes in the villages waiting for a job, listless, and quite out of their element. The tinkling of the bell announces that the "caravan is come," and in a moment they are all animation. I have often admired the contentment of these humble slaves—a quality of great worth, however mean the garb which clothes it.

On our way we met a dervish, a most singular-looking being, having a sheep's skin thrown loosely over him, which scarcely covered his body. His

feet were bare; in his right hand he held a pike, and in his left a kettle; a wreath of flowers decked his head; and he set up the most dreadful cries of "Hak, hou!" invoking us in the name of Allah. He seemed quite indifferent whether you threw any thing into his kettle or not, and without any sort of *reconnoissance* for your so doing. I had seen these dervishes before, in the bazaars. They are called "gousheh nishins," or sitters in the corners, and proclaim their doctrines in the market-places, sometimes sounding the blast of a horn, then uttering the most piercing cries. They are much respected by the populace, and, in some instances, feared.

There was nothing in Persian travel which struck me so forcibly as the Sabbath being struck out of their calendar, as it were—that

> "Most beautiful of days, when man retreats
> Within himself, and with his Creator holds
> Sweet converse."

It is true, that in continental travelling one gets accustomed by degrees to lose that rigid observance of it so noticeable in England, and which foreigners denominate so *triste*. The Mahomedans are by no means rigid observers of the Sabbath; the set-

ting apart one day of the week (Friday), which they call the "prince of days," and the day on which the last judgment will be solemnized, is required by Mahomet, though he does not demand the whole of it being consecrated to the service of God. There is less observance of this day in Persia than in Turkey; the Shah would seldom, if ever, go to the mosque, the Sultan would always go in great pomp on the Friday.

Pursuing our way to Veran Kash, we had to cross a rocky pass, which was occupied by a Koordish encampment, situated in a beautiful part of the wilderness. These nomades have apparently very good taste in this way. Whether their positions were dictated by necessity or by choice, I cannot tell—

> "Rude rocks and wild woods were their palaces,
> Streamlets their music, fountains their delight;
> The azure canopy of cloudless Heaven
> Their temple, and the cliff their mountain home."

It was now the month of July, and the sun warned us to make hasty retreat to our place of sojourn; we entered cheerfully into the stable, from whence the sun's rays were excluded, and where a dish of sour milk waited for our refresh-

ment. At this pretty village I had my full share of the vagabondising life, which I have so much enjoyed in the land of Iran, having remained here for some time. The water was abundant, and found its way to the numerous gardens, which were rich in their varied produce. The dogs, too, were civil—a most important courtesy to meet with in a Persian village. I love to revel in these Persian gardens, and find much entertainment, and, it may be, instruction, in these living emblems of Nature's magnificence. It is nature, after all, which strikes home to the heart, and finds a responsive chord in every bosom, where—

> " ——————————— Not a tree,
> A plant, a leaf, a blossom, but contains
> A folio volume; we may read, and read,
> And read again, and still find something new."

CHAPTER IX.

THE LATE WAR BETWEEN PERSIA AND RUSSIA.

This subject having been named to me by the Crown Prince, Abbas Meerza, when I had the honour of an interview with him, I gathered from himself some of the events connected with these hostilities, of which the following are the leading features.

This war, which proved so disastrous to Persia, grew out of an undefined treaty, called "the treaty of Gulistan." The Russians, having concentrated their strength in Georgia to the amount of a hundred and fifty thousand men, began to call in question this treaty, and numerous con-

ferences took place, and commissioners were appointed on both sides; but they differed so much in their construction of the treaty, that the breach widened at each meeting.

The Russians, in the meanwhile, began their territorial encroachments, and established posts, not only on the doubtful territory, but on that which was decidedly not their own. The negotiations commenced in 1817, and were continued until 1825, when the Russian troops possessed themselves of a part of the Persian frontier.

In January 1826, at the death of the late Emperor Alexander, it was hoped that the reigning emperor would be more disposed to an accommodation. He sent Prince Menzikoff to announce his accession to the throne, and to arrange the boundaries of the two kingdoms with the Prince Royal of Persia. His Royal Highness, who was always strongly in favour of British interests, advised the Shah not to receive the mission until the territory, so unjustly taken possession of by the Russians in 1825, was given up. But the Shah thought differently on the subject, and ordered the Prince to receive the Russian ambassador. The Prince did receive him with great respect, and commissioners

were immediately appointed to enquire into, and arrange, if possible, this disputed frontier.

In the meantime, the Russians were not inactive. They advanced their troops as though predetermined on the result, and as if they sought to provoke hostilities, even while in the act of negotiating. Abbas Meerza felt very keenly these indignities. His known courage and independent spirit could ill brook this duplicity, and he warmly urged the Shah to commence hostilities, even though the Prince's personal interests were formerly identified with those of Russia; for in the treaty of Gulistan, his succession to the throne of Persia was guaranteed to him, to the exclusion of his elder brother. It is true this brother was now dead, and his undoubted right by birth was fully established.

Many grievous insults were continually inflicted on Persia by the Russians. I cannot particularise them; but they were partly of a religious nature, since the moolahs were warmly excited, and called aloud on their king for revenge. His Majesty, whose temperate conduct and great forbearance were well known, thought it better to negotiate; and he tried every means to procure from the new envoy

such territorial terms as he conceived should be satisfactory to both parties; but the ambassador declared that he was not authorised to accept the terms proposed by the Shah without referring to his court.

In the meantime, the ferment in the public mind continued to increase, till it became almost a national feeling. "Our religion is in danger," was the cry of the moolahs, headed by their chief, the Mooshtahed; and the patriotic feelings of the Prince Royal were aroused for the honour and dignity of the country which he might be one day called on to govern. At length the flame spread all around, and war became inevitable.

In July 1826, the crisis arrived, and war was declared. The numerical force of the Persians in this grand undertaking was about fifty thousand men. His Royal Highness opened the campaign. Brave as the lion which surmounted his shield, and brilliant as the sun which brightened it, were the first deeds of the royal general. Vigorous in attack, and active in his movements, he surprised the Russian troops, and drove them back from their new posts, captured some of their stores, and every thing seemed to forbode a brilliant termina-

tion of the war. I am without the means of reporting particular actions, but such as I have described was the general character of the hostilities for the first twelve months, and except in instances of overwhelming numbers, Abbas Meerza was uniformly successful. His troops fought desperately before Erivan; they repulsed the Russians, drove them far within their own boundary, and had nearly taken possession of Teflis.

The Georgians, having suffered greatly under the yoke of their former governor-general, Yermoloff, joyfully received the Persians. This warlike people, having flown to arms, cut off the Russian detachment, and horrible barbarities were committed between them and the Russians, such as are quite inconsistent with modern warfare. The barbarous custom of the East still continues, of cutting off the heads of the slain, and piling them in heaps before the royal camp, where they are sometimes burnt. Numerous piles of Russian heads were thus formed, which marked the extent of the loss of the enemy. The first trophies of victory which reached Tabreez were fifty camel-loads of Russian heads, each camel bearing eight hundred heads, surmounted by a prisoner; and

heads were seen rolling about in the maidan and the bazaars in gory variety. It is a very ancient practice in Persia to offer a premium for heads during the war; and though in Turkey they get them without purchase, yet here they were worth as much as five tomauns each; and it has been stated to me, that they have actually cut off the heads of their own people to obtain the premium.

The Prince, in crossing the Arras, took some prisoners, and on his advance defeated a large party of the Russians. This emboldened him to march upon Sheesha, which he took with a numerous garrison. Here he established himself for a time, and sent out one of his generals, Ameer Khan, accompanied by a young prince, son of Abbas Meerza, with ten thousand men towards Teflis. They were encountered by a considerable Russian force, and a battle took place, to the disadvantage of the Persians.

This was the first defeat which his Royal Highness's arms had received. He now retired from Sheesha, and marched upon Teflis, to endeavour to wipe out the stain of this defeat, and revenge himself for the loss of his general. Meantime the Russian commander-in-chief had been changed;

General Yermoloff had been superseded by General Paskevitch, who was at the head of a numerous and well-disciplined army. This army the Prince resolved to attack. The Russian troops received his onset firm and immoveable in their squares, which were not to be broken by the active flying manœuvres of the Persians, who fought desperately, and did great honour to their country and their Prince. Their gallant commander seemed to hover over and direct every rank and file; his activity and bravery were never more conspicuous; it seemed as if he was fighting for empire as well as for life; and nothing but the overwhelming numerical force of the Russians, aided by their large amount of artillery, drove him from the field, from which his battalions at last fled in great confusion, with the loss of their standards, their guns, and some thousands of men.

To this indiscreet attack on the part of his Royal Highness may perhaps be attributed his subsequent disasters. He himself fled with a few attendants almost to the banks of the Arras; while the remaining troops, without their leader, marked with all the horrors of insubordination and plunder their disastrous retreat.

In the meantime, the Shah had himself approached the seat of war. He established a camp not far from Tabreez. His troops were chiefly raw and untrained bands, without pay, order, or discipline. They plundered the villages on the way, under the pretence of raising contributions for the war, and thus became a pest instead of a safeguard to their country. The Shah brought with him about eighty thousand men, and in his impetuous bravery, threatened to march to Moscow. His troops, however, demanded pay, which the King refused to give them. They then helped themselves to every thing the villages would afford, and, as a *dernier ressort*, they stole the children from one place and sold them at another for a few piastres! Plunder seems to be the chief object of Persian warfare; the love of it is so engrained in their nature, that the moment they meet with any reverse they attack their own camp, which suffers generally more from natives than from foreigners.

There were some troops of a higher caste, called the "Gholaums," who had some pretension to organisation and pay, but they were few in comparison to the rabble.

The disasters of the Prince seemed now irre-

mediable; he felt sensibly his own rashness, and having acted contrary to advice, he was plunged into profound grief, and seemed ashamed to approach his royal father's camp, to communicate the state of affairs. The Shah at first received the news of the Prince's defeat with great anger. The Prince had grossly committed himself, and he would not permit his approach. But at length relenting towards his favourite son, he sent to invite him to the camp, that he might condole with him, and devise some means of repairing these great disasters. On his arrival, the Shah received him very kindly, and plans for renewing the campaign were arranged.

At length orders were sent to re-assemble the troops in the different stations, and considerable activity was displayed for continuing the war, so far as summoning the governors of provinces for all their resources of men and subsidies. But there was one grand deficiency—that of "the sinews of war,"—the order on the treasury; for although the private treasure of the King was immense,—being estimated at thirty millions sterling, besides incalculable quantities of diamonds and pearls, unknown to any other monarch in the world,—

yet the pay of the army is derived entirely from precarious levies on the people amongst whom they may happen to be. The troops are therefore so ill paid, that the wonder seems to be how they are ever assembled. But to keep them together, particularly under defeat, was beyond the power even of Abbas Meerza himself.

In September, the Shah broke up the campaign near Tabreez, where he remained for a short time only. He soon afterwards returned to Tehran, and the Prince re-assembled the troops collected by the governors of provinces. Thus an army once more showed itself, and he took the command, hoping to retrieve his former disasters.

In the meantime the Sardar of Erivan had not been inactive. This was considered as the strongest fort, and the key to Persia. It was deemed impregnable; and the utmost importance was attached to it by the Persians, to whom it was formerly ceded by the Turks in lieu of Bagdad. The Sardar had many engagements with the Russians, in several of which he met with decided success; but latterly he was obliged to fall back, and General Madodoff made some show of marching upon Erivan. He took up his position at

Aslandoos, and there committed such devastations on the neighbouring villages, as were disgraceful to his country, unworthy the sovereign whom he served, and outraging every feeling of humanity.

The year now drawing to its close, and the season for active warfare being quite at an end, his Royal Highness retired with his ill-organized troops, and busied himself in active operations to renew the campaign in the following spring. In the meantime the Russians were not inactive. From the capital, immense trains of battering artillery were sent down, to commence the siege of Erivan. The new monarch of Russia was anxious to distinguish the commencement of his reign by some success, to wipe out the memory of the late insurrection amongst his nobles, which had well nigh proved fatal to his throne and life. Numerous levies were raised for the army of Persia, and in its ranks were young men of the first nobles, who, having borne a part in this insurrection, were degraded from their rank and fortune to the cartouch-box and the musket. A talented and indefatigable commander, General Paskevitch, was placed at the head of these troops, which were destined to pounce upon Persia with a resistless and merciless force.

On the other hand, the fallen fortunes of Abbas Meerza had so lowered him in the estimation of his troops, that he could by no means keep them together. This is a characteristic trait in the Persian troops. They are active and vigorous in the outset, but when once repulsed they soon become crest-fallen. In addition to this, the want of funds to maintain these troops was one of the leading features of his Royal Highness's disasters; and the English would not assist him, the treaty not conferring upon them sufficient power to do so.

In October this year, 1826, Major Willock was despatched to England with accounts of the success of the Persians against the Russians at the outset of the campaign. Nothing could be more unfortunate for them than this representation, since in reply to their demand for aid, it was said, "You seem to succeed so well, that you cannot want our assistance." This, I understand, was the answer of the British minister to the demand for pecuniary supplies. Nor would the East India Company afford any assistance. The burthen of the war was thus thrown entirely on Abbas Meerza himself, the Shah refusing him any assistance, either in men or money. Had the Shah seen fit to open his coffers, it is probable that the fortunes of the

Prince would have been retrieved; and to the Shah's avarice may, in a great measure, be attributed the present degraded and dependent state of Persia as regards her Russian ally; had he advanced some of his accumulated treasure to the troops who were anxious to enrol themselves in their country's cause, their ancient city of Tabreez would never have been invaded by the Russian troops.

The poor Prince was much to be pitied. Struggling with every difficulty, domestic and foreign, he still strove to support a show of resistance to the encroachment of the Russians. Every thing was done at Tabreez which the indefatigable zeal and activity of his English commander-in-chief, Major Hart, could effect, and which entitled him so truly to the Prince's confidence. A fine regiment of Serbozes, twelve hundred strong, was marched off for Erivan.* Their martial appearance and high state of discipline would have done credit to any service.

On the other hand, the Prince's own immediate

* Major Hart offered his services to take the command of the Prince's troops, but was interdicted from so doing by the British envoy.

troops deserted him; being without clothing or pay, nothing less could be expected of them. The resources of the province were not able to maintain them; and thus, unsupported by the Shah, Abbas Meerza was left alone to bear the brunt of the best disciplined troops of Russia.

Having thus shown the comparative state of affairs in the beginning of the year 1827, the result of the war may be easily anticipated. It no longer became a contest, and at one point only was resistance offered to the advance of the Russians. Erivan being strongly fortified and well garrisoned, the Persian troops here still maintained their character for bravery. Twice were the Russians repulsed outside the walls, with great loss; and it was fully proved, that with equal force and equal military advantages, as regards commanders, discipline, &c., the Persian troops were at least equal in courage and power to the Russians.

It was for some time doubted, by the Russians themselves, whether Erivan would ever fall into their hands. They renewed their efforts, brought an immense train of battering artillery, and scarcely ever did the Russian troops evince so much courage as before this place; but all did not avail, till the

power of gold was added to that of arms. In a word, the then Governor of Erivan, Hussein Khan (the Sardar being at Tabreez), opened the gates to the insidious foe; and thus, by treachery, this bulwark of Persia, this key of the empire, fell into the hands of the enemy.

So great was the indignation of the Persians against the governor on his surrender of the fortress, that he was obliged to be protected by his new masters, by a special clause in the articles of peace.

Erivan having once fallen, Persia seemed to lay prostrate at the feet of the Autocrat; but some commotion again in the town indicated an attempt towards its being regained by the Persians. This called back the general-in-chief, Paskevitch, who was then employed before Abersabad, which place was of great consequence, and an Armenian guide had arrived to inform him that there were only twelve thousand men in the town, and that it might be easily taken.

The Prince during this time was at the head of sixteen thousand men, wasting his time in the neighbourhood of Khoie, in occasional skirmishes with the Russians, instead of strengthening his

capital, and cutting off the enemy's retreat; which was then very easy, since there was a detachment of eight thousand Russians at Marand, having strict orders from the general-in-chief not to advance, but to wait his reinforcements.

This detachment having spent eight days at Marand, and seeing nothing of the Persians, the officers held a council of war, and decided on going on, and reconnoitring towards Tabreez; Colonel Espejo, with one brigade only, being the advanced guard. Near a deep ravine in the way they fell in with a party of three thousand Persians, well posted. Having established a battery, they soon dispersed them, and continued their course towards Tabreez, no more troops impeding their progress. On the morning of the 25th of October 1827, the Colonel advanced, with some Cossacks only, to the city, and took quiet possession of it, not the least resistance being offered. The Persian troops had all departed, and their chief, Allaya Khan, was found concealed in a house and taken prisoner.

In the course of the same day the remainder of the Russian troops came up, in number about eight thousand, and immediately took possession

of the Prince's palace, where the work of plunder had begun by his own confidential people, high in rank and office, and the spoliation was only stopped by the timely arrival of the Russians.

Thus fell, by a most singular concurrence of unfortunate circumstances on the part of the Persians, the celebrated city of Tabreez, which, with a comparatively small force, might have baffled the attempts of the enemy; for it is said to possess even stronger means of defence than the city of Erivan.

The gallant Prince Abbas Meerza, deserted by his troops, by his father, and by the British government, could do nothing to stem the torrent of Muscovite invasion. The Russians now made a quiet march through his territories. They advanced upon Khoie, which offered no resistance; the inhabitants of the city invited the Russian general, Pencratoff, to enter it; and he was still there with about eight thousand men when I passed through the place.

The Russian general, with the advanced guard, entered Tabreez soon after Colonel Espejo, as already alluded to. General Paskevitch was well received by the English residents; and, on his

return to Russia, acknowledged their attention by sending them crosses of honour. Some of the officers were of the flower of the Russian nobility, who had been mixed up in the late insurrection, and who, instead of being sent into Siberia, were drafted into the army of Persia. Amongst them was their celebrated poet, Pustchin, who was called the "Byron of Russia."

The entrance of the invading army into Tabreez caused very little sensation in the city, the inhabitants continuing their usual quiet round of social occupations. The Prince, at the time, was but a short distance off, with about three thousand troops: finding it impossible to oppose the Russian forces, he had kept in their rear. A British officer was deputed to inform him of the disastrous event. The Prince received the intelligence with much emotion, and seemed bitterly afflicted, the more so, that the circumstance was quite unexpected by him.

General Paskevitch took up his residence in the Prince's palace. The troops were encamped outside the town, in number about fourteen thousand, with a park of artillery of a hundred and four guns; and they remained under canvass during

the inclemencies of the winter. The greatest order prevailed for an invading army. The Persians made no complaints of injustice or aggression; but I should observe, that many private assassinations of the Russians took place, which they most assiduously concealed. This proves that, amongst the lower orders, their external cordiality with the invaders was more a matter of policy than of feeling.

The British envoy was not at Tabreez when the Russians entered the city; but General Paskevitch immediately paid his respects to his lady, and sent a guard of honour to her residence.

I have mentioned how quietly the Persians received their invaders; I will now refer to what the invaders themselves said of the events in the Petersburg Gazette. It was there stated that the strong city of Tauris was taken, after an obstinate defence, but that nothing could impede the ardour of his Imperial Majesty's troops; that they took numerous stands of colours, and that the governor at length presented the general with the keys of the city!

The colours here referred to were sent to Russia, to be paraded, and to have the Te Deum

sung over them. But I believe the following fact regarding them may be strictly relied upon:—The colours were manufactured in the bazaars a long time after the arrival of the Russians, and were well perforated with bullet-holes. The keys were also made for the occasion by M. A. Khan, with special orders that they might look as old as possible. They were *fifteen* in number, although there were only eight gates. So much for Russian gazettes!

The Russian officers mixed amongst their new friends the British with the utmost cordiality. It looked more like a visit of courtesy than a visit of war; parties were formed every evening, and it proved the gayest season ever known at Tabreez amongst the English residents. *

* I am very cautious in advancing any strong facts on Persian authorities; but my information on this point was derived from the British residents at Tabreez, and confirmed by the Russian colonel, Espejo himself, who related it to me. The copy from the St. Petersburgh Gazette I made myself; and the colours I subsequently saw in the Kremlin at Moscow, of which there were eight stands pointed out to me as "taken by the Count d'Erivansky at the siege of Tauris."

CHAPTER X.

OF THE LATE TREATY OF PEACE BETWEEN PERSIA AND RUSSIA.

HAVING cursorily glanced at the events of the late war between Russia and Persia, I will briefly revert to the treaty of peace, which was to establish everlasting friendship between the two nations. As it is rather lengthy, I will merely transcribe a few of the leading articles, which bear upon the actual political position of Persia, as regards Russia.

The treaty begins—as most of those documents do—by invoking the name of the Most High to witness professions of unaltered friendship, that are to be broken only at the first convenient season. The Count d'Erivansky (General Paskevitch) was

the Russian plenipotentiary, and Abbas Meerza, on the part of the Shah, deputed Colonel Macdonald to act for him, and at the obscure village of Tourkamanchai was this important affair settled. The third article cedes, on the part of the Shah, as well as for his heirs and successors, to the empire of Russia the khanats of Erivan and of Natchivan, to be given up to the Russian authorities in six months. The fourth article refers to the line of demarcation to establish a new frontier for the two states, the principal basis of which is, "the countries within the rivers whose waters run towards the Caspian, belong to Russia; and those whose waters run on the side of Persia, belong to Persia." The sixth article refers to the pecuniary indemnity which Russia claims for the expenses of the war, the arrangement of which is referred to a future article.

The seventh article of this treaty was important to the Prince; I therefore give the whole of it:— "His Majesty the Shah of Persia having seen fit to designate for his successor and heir Abbas Meerza, his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, as well to give to his Majesty the Shah of Persia a personal testimony of his amicable dispo-

sition, and of his desire to contribute to the consolidation of that order of succession, engages to recognise from this day, in the august person of his Royal Highness Abbas Meerza, the successor and heir-presumptive of the crown of Persia, and to consider him as legitimate sovereign of the kingdom, on his accession to the throne."

The eighth article guarantees to Russia the right of navigation on the Caspian Sea, to the exclusion of ships of war of any other power whatsoever. The tenth article refers to the establishment of commercial relations, not laying down the terms of the tariff, but with respect to the reception and establishment of consuls in the different ports. The twelfth article provides for the personal safety of the traitorous governor of Erivan, Hussein Khan, and his brother, Hassan Khan, and Kerim Khan, formerly governor of Natchivan. This is the strongest proof of their treachery. The thirteenth article refers to the exchange of prisoners. The fifteenth article grants, by the Shah, a complete amnesty to all the inhabitants of Azerbijan, for their opinions and conduct toward the Russians during their temporary occupation of the said province, with permission freely to transport their

families from the Persian into the Russian states. This stipulation holds good for one year from the date of the treaty, and expired on the 22nd of February, 1829.

This was the article alluded to by the Prince, when I had the honour of an audience with him. It had reference particularly to the Armenians, who were decoyed by the Russians in shoals from the Persian territory. I have seen districts depopulated in this way, particularly in the neighbourhood of Khoie; and thousands of them, I understand, found an early grave in Russia. Nothing grieved Abbas Meerza more than to see so many valuable "rayats," or tributary subjects, leaving their native soil, which had been manured with their industry, and rendered flourishing by their occupancy. The Armenian villages were always the most flourishing, and yielded much greater revenues than the Persian villages. One of the objects of the war, on the part of Russia, seems to have been that of acquiring population, their greediness after which was one of the causes of the massacre of their ambassador, as already related. On their part, they threw every obstacle in the way to the return of the Persians to their native

country. This was particularly the case from Georgia, and caused the Prince to remark to me, "that the obligation had not been reciprocally observed by the Russians."

The sixteenth article provides for the immediate cessation of hostilities, and that the official ratifications, with the proper signatures, shall be exchanged within four months from the date of the treaty.*

The pecuniary considerations to the Russians were seven crores of tomauns down (about three millions and a half sterling). This was immediately paid by the King. One crore of tomauns to be paid by the Prince in six months, as a guarantee for which they were to retain the town of Khoie, and two more crores of tomauns at some indefinite period, no security being required for this payment. Fifteen crores were first demanded. The payment of the eighth crore of tomauns came on during my being at Tabreez. With an exhausted treasury, the Prince found it impossible to answer it, and he applied to the Shah for assistance through one of the gentlemen of the British mission. The Shah granted him 100,000 tomauns, on the security of the applicant. Subsequently, he took down to

* Done at the village of Tourkamanchai, the 10th February, 1828; and the 5th of Sharbone, of the Hegira 1243.

the King the Prince's and the Kaimacan's receipts, in order to take up his own; but he refused to exchange them, saying, that "the one was the bond of an Englishman, whom he could trust; the other he could place no confidence in"—a pretty compliment this to his "auspicious and blessed son!"

In his subsequent difficulties, the Prince had also recourse to Major Hart for his assistance, who went to Maroga to meet him; and he acknowledged how greatly he was indebted to him for his interference. What with the Major's guarantee, and the Prince's jewels pawned to the Russians, the sum was in great part, though not wholly, made up. Thus the royal debtor was relieved from his dilemma chiefly by British aid and British credit. The Prince stripped himself of every external tinsel of royalty, even to his chair of state, an old-fashioned, huge-back, uncomfortable fabric. This, with a gold ewer and basin, and a pair of candlesticks, were taken by the Russians for thirty thousand tomauns, to be broken up for the gold which they contained. The Persian jewels pledged to the Russians consisted of a splendid gold girdle, about eight inches wide, containing diamonds, emeralds, and large rubies, valued by the Persians at 130,000 tomauns, and taken by the Russians in

pledge at 80,000 tomauns; a dagger covered with diamonds, taken in pledge at 7367 tomauns, and a star of the same materials. It was even said that the Prince was so desperately driven, as to take the rings off his wives' fingers. I can only say that I did not see them, but the other things I *did* see at the ark, or arsenal, which was the place of deposit between Persia and Russia.

With the concoction of this treaty, as I have already stated, the British Elchee, Sir John Macdonald Kennier, had a great deal to do; and he was deemed a very able diplomatist likewise in getting cancelled an existing treaty of subsidy between the Honourable Company and Persia, for which the Prince's necessities obliged him to take the *douceur* offered of 200,000 tomauns. I heard that this negotiation had given great satisfaction to the divan in Leadenhall Street, their sense of which, as I have already stated, was conveyed to the envoy.

On my arrival at Tabreez, not a tomaun was to be found in the bazaars. Those who had any were afraid to avow it, lest they might be called upon to aid the necessities of the government. Those who had none, if they possessed any credit

at all, were required to subscribe that credit to a certain amount, for a future payment. Had not the ill-timed parsimony of the divan in Leadenhall Street interfered, there is no doubt that the Prince might have retrieved his disasters with Russia, as in Persia every thing is to be done with money. To dispute the terms of the British treaty at such a moment, and to withhold their aid from a faithful ally, was unworthy that honourable Company of merchants, whose navies ride the seas, and whose armies are second only to the Wellington legions. Their subsequent purchase of the obligations of the treaty is a tacit acknowledgment of this.

The consequences of Persia being thus prostrated at the feet of Russia are notorious, not only in the supremacy of Russian influence, but the entire downfal of that of England, whose mission has been driven from the soil, their commerce left unprotected, and only three Englishmen at the present moment are to be found where so lately British influence prevailed. From the long suspended intercourse between England and Persia, it may be feared whether it can be ever cordially renewed.

It must be admitted that the Russians managed to wind up this war with an admirable tact, not only having subdued the Persians, made them pay all the expenses of the war, and annexed to their empire some fine slices of Persian territory, but converting them into zealous allies, who hugged the chains thrown over them. Such is the Persian character. They may be beaten into friendship, or rather into fear. What powder and shot failed to effect, was subsequently done by diplomacy, and by that corrupting power of gold, of which the Russians are so prodigal. *

* If it be not diverging too much from my subject, I may be allowed to say that I have often had occasion to notice not only the consummate ability, but the extraordinary success which mark all the Russian tactics, military as well as diplomatic, in the East. In the latter they have confessedly the best of Downing Street. Of the former I am not so competent to judge; but travelling as I have with the Russian troops, having visited their camps, attended their military fêtes,, and their splendid reviews in the "Champs de Mars," where their lines were walls of brass, their squares moving towers, I am a little tinctured with the belief in Russian military supremacy. The Prince Galitzen once said to me at Erzroume, "*We* make war, and *you* pay for it"—alluding to the Stock Exchange aid. He added, "What you English gain in the field you lose in the cabinet." In their two Asiatic wars, so admirably planned and so happily executed, it must be admitted that they have shown consummate tact, not merely outwitting Asiatic, but even European diplomacy. Their success is obviously owing to great

The Russian influence at Tabreez was evinced during my stay there. On the 6th of December, the news of the capture of Varna was officially announced by the Russian minister to Abbas Meerza. Mr. Grybydoff then ordered the Armenians to sing *Te Deum* in their church, which he attended with all his *cortège*, to return thanks for the success of the Emperor's arms. The Prince, in compliment to the event, invited the minister to dine with him. The dinner took place, and

liberality in the payment of their officials. Home and foreign talent brings a high price in the Russian market, and they have great discrimination in the employment of that talent. Two German counts have the leading portfolios of the cabinet, and by long continuance in office, there is no vacillation in Russian politics. The wary game is continued perseveringly; and it may be said that, for foreign diplomacy, a despotic government is much more efficient than a representative one.

In Russia, the diplomatists are trained by education and by travel for their particular department: diplomacy is as much a profession in that country as medicine and law; and they have a great facility in acquiring languages. The appointments in Russia of ambassadors, or even consuls, never emanate from family connections; the sole question is, who can serve the Emperor best? Fidelity and talent are sure to meet with splendid rewards. There is a warmth of nationality about the Russians, a loyalty which converts their Emperor into an idol; no pitiful party bickerings; no spending those energies which should be directed to their country's weal in personal wranglings and party strife; their principle is that of co-operation for the service of their country, their Emperor, and their God.

only five persons attended—all of them Russians. The British Minister and his suite were invited, but they declined thus publicly to celebrate the triumph of the Russians over the British allies—the Turks. I heard that the entertainment was a heavy affair, and that the Prince's courtesy partook more of the constrained than the voluntary quality. Some fireworks announced to the public that the entertainment was going on, and at the signal of the firing of a gun, the Russian minister handed to the Prince an order for the immediate evacuation of Khoie by the Russian troops—that place being held in pledge for the payment of the eighth crore of tomauns, and which payment, as I have already shewn, had been cancelled; but the order was never respected nor acted upon.

A few days afterwards the Prince gave another dinner to the British envoy and part of his suite. There were five gentlemen present, and it is said that they were more sumptuously entertained than were the Russians. The Prince was shortly afterwards invited by the Russian minister, by orders from his court, to visit their capital, it being intimated to him that, by this visit, he would be excused from paying the remaining two crores of

tomauns which lay over to an indefinite period. The disposition of the Prince towards this visit was never publicly known; but certain it is that great preparations were making for the journey, and that the King strongly urged him to hasten his departure. The financial supply was the only difficulty, and it was rumoured that his Majesty had sent the Prince 30,000 tomauns to pay his expenses. It was stated that the Prince was to go from St. Petersburgh to London, and that the English envoy had advised the proper authorities, in order that he might be respectfully invited. In the meanwhile that dreadful catastrophe occurred which has been related in a former chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND PERSIA.

I WILL here venture on a very slight retrospect of the political relations between Great Britain and Persia during the last forty years, previous to which time they were not deemed to be of much importance. It may be considered as rather tender ground to go over, particularly as I have never been summoned to the council board, nor permitted even to approach the vestibule of their deliberations: and I was often amused at Tabreez at the profound mystification attending those deliberations, which were soon after so freely discussed by the Persians publicly, who have no sort of objection to make known their cabinet inten-

tions; indeed, it is probable that the Grand Vizier himself, when he sits under the shaving operations of the "dellok," or barber, relates to him, in the course of common conversation, the discussions of the last privy council.

Tabreez, although only a local government, had all the importance attached to it of being the grand focus of European diplomacy. The Shah had deputed Abbas Meerza to this department of the state; the English and Russian envoys were residing at this court, and all business relating to Ferengestan was here transacted.

In the year 1800, during the enlightened and vigorous administration of the then Governor-general of India, the Marquis Wellesley, Captain John Malcolm was sent as envoy to the Persian court, with which he concluded a treaty of amity, and an engagement on the part of the Persians to send twenty thousand men to attack some Affghan tribes, bordering the Honorable Company's territories.

The great Napoleon, too, even amidst the mighty toils of European warfare, did not overlook the importance of cultivating an alliance with Persia, with the view, probably, of opening to himself a

way to British India. This was in consequence of an invitation from the Persian court, who sent an envoy, Meerza Reza, to Buonaparte, and he answered it by sending a large embassy, confided to General Gardine, in the capacity of envoy extraordinary, to undermine, if possible, the British influence. This mission met with the greatest respect from the court of Tehran; the King conferred the order of the Lion and Sun on the ambassador.* The mission excited great alarm in the government of India, and the French interests were now rapidly increasing, although in the treaty alluded to was this clause, "And should ever any person of the French nation attempt to pass your ports or boundaries, or desire to establish themselves either on the shores or frontiers, you are to take means to expel and extirpate them, and never to allow them to obtain a footing in any place, and you are at full liberty and authorised to disgrace and slay them."

The Governor-general thought it necessary to meet this vacillation of the Persian court with

* The French first appeared in Persia in 1665, and concluded a treaty with the Shah in 1674. A splendid mission was sent by Shah Sultan Hussein to Louis XIV., in relation to a trade with France over the Caspian.

menace, and accordingly prepared at Bombay an expedition of ten thousand men to act against Persia. She began to arm her frontiers, and to make preparations, as though intending to resist force by force; but she soon declined the task, and sent a plenipotentiary to India, offering to expel the French mission from Tehran.* This was hastened by her being attacked at the same time by the Russians on her northern frontiers. She likewise offered to subsidise any number of British troops to aid her against the enemy.

Sir John Malcolm was immediately dispatched again from India; but in the meantime another British mission just then made its appearance in Persia from England, headed by Sir Harford Jones, who reached Tehran February 14, 1809, thus superseding Sir John Malcolm, who for some time remained at Bushire. Sir Harford was empowered to enter into a treaty, engaging the East India Company to pay to Persia a subsidy of two hundred thousand tomauns annually, and to send her free of expense as many British officers and troops as she might require, to expel the invaders

* The ambassador was Hadji Kelel Khan, who was unfortunately killed in a fray at Bombay, as referred to by his Majesty in his letter to Abbas Meerza.

from her northern frontiers. This treaty bears date the 12th March, 1809.

What was the surprise of these two envoys, meeting on the same ground at Youjon: the first coming to treat for the Persians subsidising the British troops, the second offering them troops free of expense, and a liberal subsidy besides! These were seeming inconsistencies between the British envoys, amongst whom differences arose, and Sir John Malcolm returned immediately to India; but Sir Harford Jones remained in Persia three years, where he was highly respected, and his name is still in great repute, both with the Prince and the Shah.

It is easy to anticipate which envoy met with the most courteous reception at the court of Tehran. The treaty of Sir Harford Jones was accepted by the Persian government, and they sent an ambassador, Abul Hassan Khan, to England to obtain ratification of the treaty. This was in July, 1809, and the envoy was accompanied by Mr. Morier.

In 1810, Sir John Malcolm proceeded again to Tehran, where he was most graciously received by the King, who did not fail to notice the former meeting of the two ambassadors, so unexpected to

each other, saying, "the difficulties in his last mission were not occasioned by his Majesty." A treaty was now formed of a commercial nature. Sir John was a great favourite with the King, who invested him with the order of the Lion and Sun, and made him a Khan, and presented him with a diamond star, himself pinning it on his coat, good-humouredly saying, "the King does not understand this business."

In 1811 another mission was dispatched by the British court, having still more external pomp and consequence attached to it. Sir Gore Ousely was sent out as ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, accompanied by Major D'Arcy and another British officer, who arrived in Persia with detachments of artillery, &c. &c. At this period the war still continued with Russia, who had possessed herself of some fine provinces, and was making rapid strides upon the Persian territories, holding Lankaran, Karabaugh, &c.

France was at this time in alliance with Russia, which prevented her acting upon the treaty entered into by General Gardine, to supply Persia with a quota of troops. To this circumstance, perhaps, might be attributed the subsequent extirpation of

the French interests in this part of the world. At this time the Persian troops were in the most wretched state of discipline, with but little of artillery, magazine stores, or any thing which constituted the *matériel* of an army. The British officers having begun to effect reformation in this badly organised corps, Sir Gore Ousely began his work to reform, if possible, the late treaty entered into by Sir Harford Jones, that the expenses of the East India Company might be materially reduced; altering the rank and pay in the subsidy of the Persian troops, in a way very offensive to the government, and they positively refused to accede to such alterations.

Whilst these negotiations were pending, the army of the Prince Royal attacked the Russians at Sultonbond.

Here fell the gallant Colonel Christie, who it is said anticipated and predicted his death.* Though the warfare was not on behalf of his country's cause, he engaged in it with that ardour which is ever the characteristic of the British soldier. The result of this attack was very unfavourable to the

* On crossing the Aras to join the Persian troops, he fell into the ambuscade of the enemy and was sacrificed, a martyr to his zeal and indiscretion.

Persian troops, which induced the Shah to sign the new treaty with Sir Gore Ousely.

Just at this period a courier arrived announcing peace between Great Britain and Russia. This compelled Persia to make peace with the latter power; and on the 14th March 1812, she signed a treaty, under the mediation of the British government, yielding to Russia, Mongrelia and other territories as far as Astrachan. The most mortifying part of this treaty was, renouncing the right of navigation on the Caspian, even for a boat, and giving up those fine provinces, the neighbourhood of which abounds with forests of navy timber, the whole of which are now in possession of Russia.

In May 1814, Sir Gore Ousely took leave of the Persian court, and left in charge of British affairs Mr. Morier, who was some time after joined by Mr. Ellis, bringing with him instructions to cut off the British subsidy and every expense attached to England. This excited not only the surprise but the indignation of the Shah and his ministers, since it was said to be *contrary to Sir Gore's assurance*, and immediately the former ambassador was dispatched to England, Meerza Abul Hassan Khan, when the British cabinet agreed that one hundred thousand

tomauns, being six months arrear of the subsidy, should be immediately paid by the East India Company.

The Persians complained of a violation of the terms of treaty, in consequence of Messrs. Morier and Ellis ordering all the non-commissioned officers to leave Persia on the first of January following, although they were entitled to pay whether they remained in Persia or in India. This seems to have been an ill-timed economy, which being persisted in, the Prince resolved to procure French officers to replace them. This plan was afterwards abandoned, on Colonel D'Arcy's taking upon himself the charge of some Persian youths, to give them a liberal education in England. The Colonel for some time declined this; but he saw no alternative, and that he should seriously offend the Prince by a refusal. They accordingly proceeded to England by way of Russia.

Messrs. Morier and Ellis now quitted Tehran, and British affairs fell into the hands of Major Willock, who had formerly acted as aide-de-camp to Sir Gore Ousely; and from that time British influence and power appeared to decline, as subsequent events fully proved. This was principally

owing, I believe, to the inferior rank of the envoy, who was deemed "a third class diplomate."

Russia, after her strides of conquest in the field, began likewise to stride in the Persian cabinet. She looked forward to the annexation of Persia to her already enormous territory; and with the "telescopic eye" of anticipation India was almost to be seen in the back-ground.

In 1817, the Russian influence supplanted entirely that of the British, and a splendid mission was sent by the court of St. Petersburgh, headed by General Yermoloff, the governor of Georgia, as ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary from his Imperial Majesty the Autocrat of all the Russias. Unusual magnificence and splendour marked this mission, which dazzled the eyes of the Persians; but what glittered the most were the brilliant presents, amongst others a *glass bed.* You can, in fact, do nothing with the Persians without presents, and almost every thing *with* them. One may easily imagine how the King's eyes glistened as he surveyed the services of cut glass and porcelain, the diamond plumes, snuff-boxes, rings, &c.

From the period of this mission, the British

government appear to have thought Persia of little importance with regard to political relations. The Russians thought otherwise, and did their utmost to establish friendly relations with this country. The consequence was an uninterrupted and almost exclusive supply of her manufactures; the bazaars were filled with them, and caravans pouring down from Georgia almost weekly, gorged the markets with her fabrics, which, to the amount of half a million sterling, were imported there annually.

General Yermoloff concluded a treaty with the court of Tehran, political and commercial, highly advantageous to Russia, and left in charge of Russian affairs Colonel Muzzaravich, who was much liked amongst the Persians for his liberal expenditure and conciliating address.

Russia having now conquered in the cabinet as well as in the field, thought only of augmenting her armies on her newly-acquired frontiers, and the answer given to an enquiry was, that "the Persians must submit to the dictation of Russia with respect to a successor to the throne on the death of Futteh Ali, the present Shah." This seemed like opening the leaf of future intentions;

but apparently it excited no attention on the part of the British resident, who, from his opposition to the wishes of the Prince Royal, made himself personally obnoxious, and occasioned comparisons to the disadvantage of himself and the British interests.

At length serious differences arose between them, about the payment of the arrears of the subsidy already alluded to, which the Shah had transferred to his son Abbas Meerza, and on account of it Major Willock had advanced him the sum of ten thousand tomauns; but a subsequent order which the Prince gave upon him he chose to dishonour, alleging to the Kaimacan (or prime minister) a breach of faith on the part of Persia in entering the Turkish territory, contrary to their promise to him. This gave great offence to the Kaimacan and the Prince; they denied the charge, and said that such a complaint came with very ill grace from Major Willock, who had never interposed amidst all the insults which they had received from the Turkish commanders.

This affair increased the Shah's suspicions formerly entertained, that the delay in fulfilling the engagement of the British government was solely

due to their chargé-d'affaires, and in a moment of irritation he forced the payment from his minister, Meerza Abul Hassan Khan, by whose embassy to the court of St. James's that engagement had been entered into. The Shah sent Aga Mahomed Kerreem to Major Willock to insist on payment of the Prince's order, who told the British chargé (but without the sanction of the King) that if the money was not paid in five days, he had the Shah's command to cut off his head.

The chargé immediately taking alarm hastened to the frontiers. The Shah assured him (and under his own seal) that nothing of the sort was intended; he made a public apology to him for the conduct of his messenger, and condescended to pay him every mark of kindness to regain his confidence. The ministers made their explanations to him, but nothing would tempt the chargé back. His imagination was constantly haunted with the spectre of the "Ferusha Ghuzzub," or executioner.

Being frightened from his post, Major Willock hastened to London, although the Shah informed him that if he left the court unpleasantly, or contrary to his wishes, Persia would feel it essential to her dignity to dispatch an envoy to England

with a report of the chargé's offensive conduct, and to require the appointment of another person in his stead.

To the British minister for foreign affairs (the late Lord Londonderry) Major Willock made his complaint;—whose reply was—"The treatment you have met with by no means authorized you to leave your post. In four days prepare to return to Tehran. (Such is my Treasury minute.)"

Within that time the minister was no more, and his successor, Mr. Canning, said he would not be troubled with Persian affairs, and transferred them over to the East India Company.

Meerza Saulaeh, the envoy from the Persian court, then arrived in London, and made his representation of the conduct of Major Willock. The consequence was, that it was determined to make some new appointment to the court of Tehran. This being now vested in the East India Company, a mission was prepared by them, appointing Colonel Macdonald Kennier as agent or representative of the Honourable Company, but not accredited as an ambassador from his Britannic Majesty.

In this capacity the King for a long time refused

to receive the mission. It was beneath his dignity to entertain an envoy from a company of merchants; but they having paid over the arrears of the subsidy, and Abbas Meerza being influenced by the generalissimo of his forces, whose opinion he much respected, advised the Shah to receive the mission, and in the early part of 1826, he dispatched a distinguished messenger to India, inviting them to come up.

On the arrival of the Colonel in September, the King was then in camp, to which he went, and was received very graciously on the 7th, the Shah observing that "his place had long been empty." As usual, the presents were displayed, and these are ample credentials at the Persian court.

Nothing that I am aware of disturbed the good understanding between the envoy and the court, with which he was a favourite, and particularly since by his mediation the peace was brought about with Russia, though on terms very disadvantageous to Persia, yet better than was at the moment anticipated.*

The treaty formerly alluded to as entered into by Sir Harford Jones, to pay two hundred thousand

* For an account of the Colonel's death, see Chapter 7.

tomauns annually to extirpate the French interests from Persia, was considered at an end when the danger was removed; but a clause was attached to it of renewal in case the Persians were attacked by the Russians. The result of the late war with that country occasioned much discussion respecting this clause: the English declaring that, as the war was begun by Persia, no subsidy could be claimed by them; and the latter arguing that they were still entitled to their pecuniary claim. This difference at the time materially weakened the British interests at the court of Tabreez, where money was so greatly needed.

At the death of Sir John Macdonald Kennier, in the month of June, 1830, Captain Campbell was left in charge of Persian affairs, and on the 25th March, 1832, he received from India his regular appointment of envoy to the court of Tehran, to which city he proceeded, and occupied the British residency.

Persian political events now became stirring and interesting. The declining health of the Shah gave great inquietude to thinking men, since apparently the quiet and welfare of the country depended on the precarious tenure of his existence. The

heir-apparent, Mahomed Meerza, who had been appointed by the Shah as his successor to the throne, and acknowledged as such by the British and Russian courts, was now hastening from Khorassan at the head of his army, to assert his right, and had arrived at Tabreez to resume the government of Azerbijan. Already were the rival chiefs preparing themselves to buckle on the armour of warfare. The Governor of Shirauz even refused to pay up the arrears of the "tribute" money, which so incensed the old Shah, that it seemed to have lent him new vigour; the scent of gold, even at a distance, gave him new life as it were. He summoned a large army, placed himself at the head of it, and marched towards Shirauz, threatening vengeance on his contumacious son. Arrived at Ispahan (as already stated), there he terminated his mortal career, on the 24th October, 1834, after a prosperous reign of thirty-five years, and in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

Immediately the Zil y Sultaun, the eldest son, and only brother of the late Abbas Meerza, and formerly the shadow of the Shah (which his title denotes), proclaimed himself as the substance, and nothing less, than "the King of Kings;" at

the same time possessing himself of the treasury. This latter was the most effective step to empire, since, as I have shown, money will do all things in Persia. With it he found no difficulty to establish his authority in the capital, where it was universally acknowledged. But, as is the case in most Eastern successions, rival candidates started up to dispute with him the possession of the throne. There was one at Shirauz, Hussein Ali Meerza; another in the person of the Firman Firmace, or Governor of Fars, who was crowned as Hoosein Shah.

Thus Persia became a prey to intestine disorders; but they did not last long. When the death of the Shah was announced at Tabreez, his appointed successor was proclaimed Mahomed Shah, on the 9th of November, and acknowledged as such by the ambassadors of England and Russia. Immediately every effort was made to put an army in motion, that he might proceed to the capital, and take possession of the throne of his ancestors; but the stamina of its existence was wanting—money—the treasury was empty, and there were no means of raising supplies. The evil genius of the Kaimacan was

for a time in the ascendant, every thing was paralyzed.

What Persia could not do for herself, her faithful ally, Great Britain, did for her.* Sir John Campbell, with an energy which was scarcely to be exceeded had it been to gain an empire for himself and heirs, gave an impetus to the proceedings of the Shah. He advanced him immediately £20,000 on the credit of his government; he personally attended at the arsenal to hasten the completion of the guns; he inspected the serbozes, paid the men three tomauns each, promising them their arrears on arrival at Tehran; in fact, it might have been almost imagined that he was going to supplant the Shah himself, such was his activity.

The Shah on the second day of his reign, at the lucky hour appointed by the astrologers, departed towards the capital, establishing himself in a garden not far from the city. Here he assembled the troops, and promised them every thing they

* The troops were in arrears three years' pay, nor would they march until some money was advanced to them; there was at the time a respectable army at Khoe, orders for which were immediately sent off, and on the 15th they arrived, commanded by the Ameer y Nizam.

could want on arrival at Tehran, plenty of fine words but no "siller." Sir John, however, had set them in movement, as already alluded to.

Sir Henry Bethune took the lead, commanding the troops, and on the 23d November they finally quitted Tabreez; the Shah now proceeded, accompanied by the English and Russian ambassadors. On arrival at Kasvine, intelligence was received that the troops of the Tehran Shah were marching in great force to oppose the Tabreez Shah, commanded by Eman Nadir Meerza. The advanced guard of each army had some skirmishes, which terminated always in favour of the forces of the latter. The King sent on a large force, attended by ten pieces of artillery.

A letter was forwarded from the real Shah to his rival, promising him immunity for his rebellion, provided he immediately surrendered up himself, guaranteeing to him his eyes, amongst other advantages; and to confirm this guarantee, it was signed by the two ambassadors. Immediately the King with his forces marched on, and his cause was strengthened by the adherence to it of two of the ministers of the late Shah, the Mootimet u Doulut, and the Asseff u Doulut. But Sir

John Campbell had proceeded with the British commander, to exert his influence amongst the chiefs of the usurper's army, and to try what he could do with the commander himself. He succeeded in weaning many of the troops, and their commander seeing them desert, came in on the 17th to make his submission, and to negotiate for his brother, for whom having made capital terms, he proceeded to Tehran, bearing a firmaun to the usurper, that "he must abstain from plundering the royal treasury, that his offences should be pardoned, and that he should be continued as governor of Tehran." But in the meantime he had been arrested, and for safe custody delivered over to the ladies of the harem.

The King arrived on the plains of Tehran on the 20th December; here he reviewed the troops, gave them a plenty of the "chum y chum," or compliments, as to their zeal and activity, how he meant to reward them, &c. On the way he was greeted by his loyal subjects with the sacrifices of camels, sheep, and oxen, being slain before him; scattering sweetmeats, flowers, and other oriental offerings; breaking bottles filled with liqueurs, &c. The following morning, at

six o'clock, was the propitious hour fixed on by the astrologers for his Majesty's happy entry into Tehran.

The Shah, with all the "pomp and circumstance" of oriental parade, mounted on a splendid charger, richly caparisoned, attended by the two ambassadors and their suite, surrounded by the khans and dignitaries of his court, with the many "shah zadehs," or princes, in their splendid costumes; the chiefs of the different tribes; the Koords, with their flaunting finery, and their silk streamers; the Eeleauts, curvetting on their small steeds, and the gaping crowds, bending lowly to the passing dignity of majesty. It is described as a fine oriental scene, and the bright rays of the morning sun threw a brilliance over the whole, which seemed to gladden the march of the young Shah.

On arrival at the palace, his Majesty retired for a short time to robe himself, and shortly returned to give audience to his admiring subjects, the foreign ambassadors, &c. When the ceremonies were all arranged, the ministers were introduced, and on the chair of state, with his crown on, and adorned with all the costliness of the Persian

jewellery, sat the newly enthroned monarch, "the asylum of the universe," &c., and every one bowed before him. The ambassadors being now ordered to be seated, offered the sweet incense of their congratulations, as did also the grandees of the empire, and on the part of the people a salute of one hundred and one guns was fired. His Majesty then made a long and most gracious speech, addressing himself to the two ambassadors, thanking them for the trouble which they had taken, and particularly addressing himself to Sir John Campbell, calling him his friend, saying that he was indebted to him for his crown, &c. After some forms gone through the audience closed, and the assembly departed.

The ceremony of the coronation did not take place until the 28th of December, in the meanwhile every thing remained tranquil; the troops would occasionally give angry indications of the want of pay, but these were soon silenced. On this day Tehran showed unusual bustle and activity, all the respectable inhabitants were thronging towards the great "Maidan;" the grandees and princes were assembled in the court of the Mirror Palace; the latter in their splendid dresses shone

brilliantly in the gorgeous display; the ambassadors were present, and every thing conspired to give *éclat* to the crowning scene. His Majesty having mounted the throne, this was announced by a salute of one hundred and one guns from the "zambrook," artillery. *

The King gave two whiffs from his splendid "kalleoon;" the coronation prayer was then offered by the moolah, who proclaimed him as "Shah Mahmoud Padi Shah of all Persia;" invoking the blessings of heaven upon him, complimenting his Majesty on being called upon to reign over the greatest empire in the world, the most renowned for its antiquity, and for the unchangeableness of its laws and customs, &c. Whenever the name of the Shah was pronounced all persons bowed profoundly to the Zil Allum, or shadow of God. The King replied briefly, in which he promised to govern by the laws established, &c. The ceremony was short, the assembly dispersed, and soon after the King gave private audience to the two ambassadors, in which he again expressed how much he was indebted to Sir John Campbell

* The marble throne I have already described, with its exquisite sculpture of unmeaning figures. (See Chapter 13.)

for his exertions, adding familiarly, "the English are fine fellows."

The other competitors to the throne were soon after silenced. The Zil u Sultaun had reigned only thirty-five days, but the Firman Firmace did not so soon give up, having been crowned as Hoosein Shah; his party was strengthened by the adherence to him of the Sheik ul Islam, or the chief of the priesthood, and the Ameen u Doulut, or prime minister of the late King.

A force of about two thousand troops and sixteen guns was got ready in about a month, under the orders of Sir H. Bethune, to take possession of Ispahan. By making a forced march, the English general arrived in that city in time to save the governor, against whom the people had risen in rebellion. In the meantime a large force was said to be advancing from Shirauz, headed by Hussein Ali Meerza, one of the candidates for empire, who had joined the "Firman Firmace." The general advanced to meet them, and contriving to get between the troops and their baggage, he defeated the former and captured the latter. This intelligence reaching Shirauz, Hoosein Shah determined to make a last struggle for empire.

Assisted by his sons, Reza Koolie Meerza, Nejef Koolie Meerza, and Timour Meerza, they made a desperate attempt to establish their authority amongst the Shirauzees, in which they failed, after some gallant fighting. The father was taken prisoner, and died shortly after of an attack of cholera. The sons escaped, and subsequently made their way to England, to seek redress and assistance from the British government, by whom they were hospitably entertained, and sent back to Constantinople at their expense.* The troops then made their way to Shirauz, where the advanced guard, under Colonel Shee, made the two brothers, Hoosein and Hassan Ali Meerzas, prisoners.

Thus ended the civil strife which placed on the throne of Persia Mahmoud Shah, the acknowledged and legitimate successor of his grandfather. There were some minor actors in the drama: two brothers of the Shah, Khosroo Meerza and Jehan

* I met these princes, on their return to the East, at Gallaz, and voyaged with them by the Danube to Constantinople. Their reminiscences of their English visit were exceedingly entertaining, their prevalent desire being for an early return to this country. I have heard that they are pensioners on the British government to the amount of £2000; but I can by no means guarantee this information.

Ghyr Meerza, of whose exploits I know nothing, except that it led to their being deprived of their eyes, which I learnt on my last visit to Persia, in 1836.

The strictest concord was observed by the two ambassadors of England and Russia during these events, from the identity of interests of the two countries, their policy securing the tranquillity of Persia under the sceptre of a prince whom their respective governments had formerly acknowledged. But subsequent events have led to an estrangement between Great Britain and Persia, which may be much to be lamented and difficult to reconcile. These I will very briefly revert to. Having never approached even to the vestibule of Downing Street, I cannot stand charged with betraying any of their secrets; but how far I may have penetrated into a Persian divan is known only to myself. Sir John Campbell returned from Persia; Mr. Hume lauded him in the Commons, and Lord Palmerston recalled him!

A mission was now on the "tapis" of congratulation to the Shah of Persia. In the meantime how Great Britain was represented at that court I could never find out, since Sir John Campbell's

first secretary, second secretary, doctor, &c., had all left Persia in the person of Mr. M'Neill. At the head of the congratulatory mission the Right Hon. Mr. Ellis was placed; a gentleman, as I have heard on all sides, than whom none more competent, or more agreeable to the Persians, could, perhaps, have been found.

Mr. Ellis arrived at Tehran about the middle of October, 1835, and was most graciously received by the Shah, whose eyes glistened at the costly presents sent him by his cousin of England, and was profuse in his expressions of gratitude to the King of England, and for the assistance so lately rendered him by the British government. On taking leave, the Shah promised him all that he could require in the matter of a commercial treaty, which had been long asked for by the British government, in order that her commerce might be equally protected and favoured as to duties as that of Russia. The ambassador was graciously presented with many costly gifts, amongst others that of the portrait of the Shah, set in brilliants. He arrived at Tabreez, on his way to England, on the 3d of June, 1836, there awaiting the arrival of his successor, Mr. M'Neill.

About this time, Sir Henry Bethune again arrived at Tehran, bearing a letter from the King of England to the Shah of Persia, by whom he was received with much courtesy, his Majesty immediately appointing him to the command of ten thousand men, and granting him a firmaun, in which he was instructed "to teach the Persians the art of war," &c. Sir Henry brought with him, at great personal expense, miners and machinery, with which to work the mines of Persia, and with great activity and energy were these put in movement in the iron mines of Karadagh, so abundantly rich in this metal. Under what "firmaun," so rich in promises as they generally are, the British general was induced to launch into this speculation I never heard; but I certainly did hear, that not one of these promises had been realised, and that Sir Henry had found a grave for his capital (so far as it went) in the Persian soil, without any chance of even a remote remuneration. But this is episodical to my subject; and I will now briefly glance at Persian returns for British services.

Sir Henry, who had so distinguished himself as the gallant leader of the Shah's forces, was now

abandoned by them. The Persian colonels refused to obey him, and I heard the most amusing though the most disgraceful anecdotes on this subject; the commander-in-chief having on one occasion marched off, as he thought, at the head of his forces, whilst they all marched another way. The Shah, to disembarrass himself of his unpopular commander, gave orders that he should head the army for Herat; he refused to obey, and consequently retired from the Persian service.

Mr. M'Neill proceeded to Persia in 1836, with the appointment of "envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the court of Tehran." The Shah was then busily engaged with the siege of Herat, marching and counter-marching, with no other effect than wasting his army and resources, devastating the country, and rendering himself unpopular with his faithful subjects.

It seems that Mr. Ellis felt rather sensitive on the subject of the Herat expedition when in Persia; and the Shah gave him the following explanation of its origin, provocation, and object:—"That Kamram Meerza, and the Affghauns under his authority, had penetrated from Seistan to Khorassan, and had carried away twelve thousand pri-

soners, whom they had sold as slaves, and had compelled the chief of Khain, his subject, to send tribute to Kamram Meerza; that the chiefs of Khain and Khaf, both towns of Khorassan, had sent agents to say that they must be immediately supported by the Shah, or submit to Kamram. His object was to redeem his captive subjects, to impose the tribute on Kamram, and to make him acknowledge his dependence on Persia."

Mr. Ellis seems to have concurred in the justice of the Shah's cause in marching against Herat, and so did Mr. M'Neill, in his dispatch to Lord Palmerston, dated February 1837. "Under these circumstances there cannot, I think, be a doubt that the Shah is fully warranted in making war against Prince Kamram;" adding, "that the capture of Herat would be certainly an evil of great magnitude."* A great deal was said at the time of the Russian influence at the court of Tehran, and that the Shah had been urged to undertake this expedition at the dicta of their ambassador, the Count Simonitch. Notes were passed, and explanations given on the part of Russia: such

* See papers presented to parliament relating to Persia, &c.

explanations were deemed *perfectly satisfactory* by Lord Palmerston.

Previous to Mr. Ellis's quitting Persia, he had made some effort to induce a reconciliation between the Shah and Kamram Meerza, which was assented to by the Persian grand vizier, Hajee Meerza Aghassee; and a letter was sent on the part of Mr. Ellis, through the Persian authorities, which suggested that he should send a confidential agent to the Shah to negotiate. To this no reply was given, but further provocations offered, by putting to death some of the Persian residents of Herat.

The Shah himself tried to bring him to terms in the winter of 1836; his reply was rather laconic:—"You demand hostages—we will give none; you demand a present—we will give what we can afford. If the Shah is not satisfied with this, let him come, and we will defend our city as long as we can; if we are driven from it, it will remain in your hands until we can find means to take it back again."

Kamram then assumed the title of Shah, with the lofty style of "Kibleh Alum," thereby dis-

claiming all dependence upon Persia. In the spring of the year, Kamram sent to negotiate, but retaining the newly assumed title of Shah, and offering such conditions that Mr. M'Neill thought they *ought* to have been accepted by the Persian government; but *they* thought otherwise; on which he assumed that it now became "an unjust war" on their part, of which he had formerly said, "the Shah is fully warranted in making war against Prince Kamram." But what said the prime minister of Persia in reply to this? "No confidence whatever is to be placed in these propositions, nor reliance on their assertions; whilst they seek to negotiate, complaints are coming in against the Affghauns from the nobles and priesthood of Khorassan, and other foreigners and natives."

In July 1837, the Shah set out on another expedition to Herat, in which he was said to have been assisted by the Russian minister. I should have before noticed that the English were bound by the treaty of Tehran of 1814 not to interfere between Persia and the Affghauns, acknowledging an equality between them. The Persian government felt therefore some little jealousy against the intercourse kept up between Mr. M'Neill and

the chief of Herat, which goes far to explain the transactions which subsequently occurred.

The agent from Herat who came up to negotiate, was accompanied on his return by a messenger of Mr. M'Neill's (Ali Mahomed Beg); he remained some time at Herat, and was on the 16th of October dispatched with letters for him from the agent and the vizier, and from Lieutenant Pottinger, a British officer, then in that city. Having passed the Persian camp, he was recognised not far from Meshed, under very suspicious circumstances. He was seized, brought back to the camp, ill-treated, and placed in custody.

Colonel Stoddart, then at the camp, remonstrated with the authorities, saying that this man was in the service of the mission; but they stripped him, took from him the letters, and returned that of Lieutenant Pottinger unopened. Hajee Khan, the Persian officer by whose orders this was done, appears to have been extremely violent, and his servants took away the man's property.

This outrage was deemed by Mr. M'Neill to be "a grave insult to the British government," for which he demanded an immediate apology of the Persian government, and the dismissal and disgrace

of Hajeē Khan; intimating that "if this moderate demand was not complied with, he would suspend his intercourse with the Persian government."

They replied (referring to the treaty already alluded to), that a servant of Mr. M'Neill, a Persian subject, had been employed to encourage and strengthen the Affghauns; that the sway of the Shah of Persia over his subjects was despotic; that this man had some secret purpose in going to Herat; that the conduct imputed to Hajee Khan was misrepresented, &c.

In March 1838, Mr. M'Neill resolved to go to the Persian camp. On his arrival he had an audience of the Shah, who assured him of his sincere desire to maintain friendly relations with the British government. He had the same professions from the prime minister, Hajee Meerza Aghasee. He then sent Major Todd into Herat, to ascertain the feelings of its ruler towards an accommodation, and subsequently went into the city himself on the 10th of April, where he had a long conference with the prime minister, Yar Mahmoud Khan, said to have been "the most remarkable man of his age and country."

A draft of a treaty was then arranged, in which

all the different points were acceded to, except the independence of Herat. This Mr. M'Neill reported to the Shah, calling the governor of Herat at the same time *Kamram Shah.* This was deemed personally offensive, and he declared that the siege should go on. From that time the siege went on with renewed activity, and the defence of Herat was mainly conducted by a British officer, Lieutenant Pottinger, who had been indefatigable in constructing these defences. Mr. M'Neill then wrote a note in very strong terms to the Persian government, which was replied to by the prime minister very moderately, asserting their rights, &c.

The instructions from the Foreign-office to their representative in Persia were deemed by the Persians to be rather stringent; and the mode of communicating them very offensive.* The "ultimatum" of the demands of the British government was set before the Shah at an audience had of him by Mr. M'Neill in May 1838, and he seemed disposed to accede to them all, so that his honour and credit might be preserved amongst his own people for abandoning the siege of Herat. This led to sundry correspondence with the grand vizier

* See Appendix.

of Persia, when all the demands of the British government were *unequivocally acceded to*; he was desirous to arrange every subject of dissatisfaction, although Mr. M'Neill had previously written in the following terms—" that in the event of a refusal to comply with these demands, the British government can pursue no other course than by employing the *ample means* at its command to oblige the Persian government."

With all the ready compliance of the grand vizier, still the British envoy was not satisfied. Ten days after, at an audience, he complained to the Shah that the demands had not been agreed to. The Shah said that he had agreed to them, and would write to that effect; and a note was written accordingly, doing more credit to the Persian minister than did the irritating cavils of the British envoy to himself, who seemed *determined* to be dissatisfied His complaint now was " that the mission was falling into disrespect from the late outrage on one of its servants; he resolved, therefore, to restore the mission to its proper position, or to quit the court;" adding, " that as the indignities and insults offered to the British government were unrepaired, and as the Persian

government had determined to subject him to unworthy treatment, such as no British minister was ever before subject to at the court of the Shah of Persia, he should set out on the following day for the Turkish frontiers."

Here was menace in reply to concessions—a declaration of war where peace had been proffered. What less than saying, "I am *determined* to break with you, in spite of all you can say or do?" And here the good sense of the Shah manifests itself in his forbearance and conciliatory reply: "We do not know what is your Excellency's object in these writings, and what you propose to yourself, and what you desire; secondly, there has been no breach of treaty nor engagement on the part of the Persian government, and no indignity nor disrespect has been offered to your Excellency which should cause you offence." This was from the grand vizier, who added the Shah's own words—"His Majesty entreats that the British minister would not depart."

Nothing seemingly would do with an envoy determined to pick a quarrel. He sends in now a written memorandum of demands, a compliance being required to them in three days.

The Shah was quite uneasy at the threatened departure of the British minister, and pressed him to meet his prime minister to arrange these demands, who writes, "His Majesty has issued his commands that we agree to all his Excellency's demands, according *to his own writing*, and nothing else remains." But Mr. M'Neill would not meet the minister without first having it under the Shah's seal "that the reparation and the satisfaction he had demanded would be granted." This not being complied with, he took his departure, convinced "that he had exhausted all the means at his command to induce the Persian government so to act as to enable him to remain without dishonour."

Really this did appear like treating Persia with unexampled severity,—as if wounding his own government by a seeming injustice, which it could scarcely be supposed could emanate from Downing-street.

Mr. M'Neill then retired from the camp before Herat. He arrived at Meshed on the 25th of June, on his way to the Turkish frontiers. From hence his letter to Lord Palmerston says, "that the British mission was treated by the Persian

government as a proscribed body." In the meantime Herat had been assaulted by the Persian troops, who were repulsed with the loss of eighteen hundred men, and some of their best officers.

Arrived at Tehran on the 30th July, Mr. M'Neill sent instructions to Colonel Stoddart, still remaining in the Shah's camp, "that if the siege of Herat was persevered in, the friendly relations between Great Britain and Persia must cease, and the former must take such steps as she may think best calculated for the security of the British Crown." The Shah replied to the Colonel at the audience, "We consent to the whole demands of the British government;—we will not go to war;" and his Majesty commenced his march back to Persia on the 9th September.

One of his first steps of conciliation with the British minister was to dismiss Hajee Khan, who had maltreated the envoy's "beg," already alluded to; and Mr. M'Neill halted on his way, intending to resume his functions at the Persian court. But some new offence was now mooted; that "he had been informed that the Persian government had made a communication to at least one foreign government, reflecting in an unfriendly manner

on the conduct of the British government, and the proceedings of its agent." He then requested a copy of this document, which they declined giving.

This looks like an ingenious peg to hang a complaint upon;—as if *any* government was to give up its private correspondence at the demand of an angry British minister. Such a seemingly frivolous demand, after so many others of large importance had been granted, was enough to drive any government to desperation. The minister replied, "that the paper in question contained nothing to prevent the envoy coming from Tehran;" and he said to the messenger in an emphatic manner, "do not press me any more, or we certainly shall connect ourselves more closely and intimately with another European government."

This demand seems to have exhausted the patience of the Persian minister, and here the correspondence ceased, and seemingly on a frivolous point, totally unconnected with the interests of the British government; a provocation was offered, which resulted in the menace thrown out by Hadji Meerza Aghasee, that Persia would throw herself into the arms of Russia.

The British minister, on the 10th July, 1838,

issued a circular to the British merchants in Persia, that "all diplomatic intercourse between Great Britain and Persia had ceased; he had left the Shah's camp, and intended to proceed to Constantinople, to wait for instructions." He arrived at Tehran on the 23rd July, and finally left Persia the 3rd January, 1839, giving instructions to Colonel Shee and the British officers to proceed to Bagdad; and our envoy extraordinary arrived in England accordingly.

Here I ought perhaps to end my long political yarn; but I have a sort of yearning towards Iran and the Iranis, having so frequently "been salted with their salt, and smothered with their flattery." I am therefore desirous to find some loophole to resume friendly relations with Persia—not by any compromise of our national dignity;—I would resent this as strongly as Sir John M'Neill himself; but I would take up "the reed of friendship, and offer the rose-bud of reconciliation" with hearty good will, purpose, and dignity. They made the first attempt, by sending, as "ambassador reconciliatory," Hoosein Khan, whom I had known long ago in Persia, in certainly any thing but diplomatic life. Lord Palmerston answered, in

reply to some question by an honourable member of the House of Commons, "that he had recommended her Majesty should not receive him in that capacity;" so he returned again, to strengthen the unfriendly feeling towards England. This was in the spring of 1839.*

But now comes the political consideration, "Is the friendship of Persia worth the purchase, or her enmity worth the averting?" How shall *I* pretend to answer these questions, who have never breathed in a political atmosphere? Persia has been long in a state of "decadence;" other and neighbour states thrive, and she withers; she has virtually lost her independence; the blight of oppression alienates her people from loyalty to the throne, patriotism, and all the other good feelings by which states thrive and kings govern.

* Hoosein Khan, on his return to Persia, was well received by the Shah. His success in inducing an embasy from the French court, had, in some measure, compensated for his not succeeding at the court of St. James's. But recent accounts from Persia state that he has been disgraced, and publicly bastinadoed, for some alleged disrespect to the Shah; nor has he been restored to the royal favor by receiving a kalaat, which sometimes follows the bastinadoe. This is another instance, in addition to those I have already adduced, of the precariousness of the royal favor in Persia.

This is the "worm i' the bud," which will soon wipe her out of the map of nations.

Russia is looked to as the natural protectress of this falling empire; such is the feeling amongst the Persians themselves. Men of rank, fed by Russian bribes, attack her vitals, betray her interests, and thus accelerate her downfall. They make no secret of being in the Russian pay; her merchants engross the commerce, and exercise a tyranny in the bazaars which the native merchants cannot exercise.* Greek establishments are formed under Russian protection. Thus Russia in every way insinuates herself, which it might have been imagined to be British policy as far as possible to counteract.

Of the British residents only three remain; of the British commerce I am not aware that there are *any* remains. Where our name formerly was exalted, it is now degraded; where our influence was predominant, now it is null; and it is rapidly coming to pass the ominous prediction of Hadji Meerza Aghasee, "do not press me any more, or we shall certainly connect ourselves more closely and intimately with another European government."

* See Page 233.

The gangrene of both political and national animosity of "Persia and the Persians" towards "England and the English" has now grown to such a pass, that I query if the diplomatic skill of even Sir John M'Neill himself could heal it. We are held by them in contempt; nay, our military prowess is derided, in consequence of some paltry rencontres lately with the Persians at Bushire, in which they were successful!

This may perhaps give some uneasiness in Downing Street; I have no means of knowing, not having even a portico acquaintance there; but I trust that the vigilance of a British parliament will not allow our relations with Persia to remain longer in this nondescript state of abeyance, still having a mission hovering about somewhere on the frontiers,—daring nothing, winning nothing. Surely this is unworthy the dignity of this great nation.

From recent accounts, Persia is in a most disorganised state, both south and north, and seemingly drawing fast towards dissolution. Rival chiefs are starting up, defying legal authorities, and levying contributions as systematic plunder. But in our recent political transactions in that

country, unless the under currents of diplomacy from the Foreign-office to her minister turn up something very different from what floats on the surface, or that Persia has been guilty of some political immorality, of which we know nothing, it does appear that this country, which for the last forty years we have been subsidising, wooing, and winning, has been estranged from us by a frivolous and vexatious complaint, unworthy the diplomatic intercourse of any nation. Well may they "laugh at our beards," having taken our money and profited by our military discipline. The moment their costly friendship was secured to us we fling it away. The minister was rewarded, and Persia is lost to us!

NOTE.—Whilst I am writing this I perceive that the Earl of Rippon has given notice in the House of Lords of an early parliamentary enquiry on the subject of Persia. I trust that it will lead to the re-establishing our friendly relations with that country, and that we shall be permitted once more to smoke the pipe of friendship with the "Adjemis."

CHAPTER XII.

COMMERCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND PERSIA.

THE cultivation of commerce between England and Persia appears to be an object well deserving the attention, as affording employment for that British capital and industry which require almost new worlds to spring up for their absorption. It did seem astonishing that the immense field which Persia offers for commercial enterprise had been so long unexplored by British merchants, or explored only to a very limited extent, and in small ventures, which made their precarious way from India, but never in sufficient quantities to answer the demand, or with sufficient regularity to give ground for any just estimate on the subject.

The resources and capabilities of Persia were but little known until they attracted the attention of the English nation so far back as 1553, in the reign of Edward VI., who thought it practicable to establish a commercial intercourse with Persia by the Caspian. In 1561, Queen Elizabeth sent out her ambassador, Anthony Jenkinson, to Taehmas Shâh, the then King; but the country was in too disorganised a state, by the invasion of the Affghans, to admit of any beneficial results. The quaint and simple style of her Majesty's address was as follows:—

"Elizabeth, by the grace of God Queen of England, &c. To the right mightie and right victorious Prince, the great Sophie, Emperor of the Persians, Medes, Parthians, Carmanarians, Magians, of the people on this side and beyond the river Tygris, and of all men and nations between the Caspian Sea and the Gulph of Persia, greeting, and most happye increase in all prosperitie. By the goodness of the Almightie God it is ordayned that those people which not only the huge distance of land and the invincible wideness of the seas, but also the very quarters of the heavens, doe moste farre seperate and sette asunder,

may neverthelesse through good commendation by writing, bothe ease and also communicate between them not onely the conceived thoughts or deliberations and grateful offices of humanitie, but also many commodities of mutual intelligence. Therefore, whereas our faithful and right well beloved servant Anthonie Jenkinson, bearer of these our letters, is determined, with our license, favor, and grace, to passe out of this our realme, and by God's sufferance to travel even into Persia and other your jurisdictions, we mind truly with your good favore to sette forward and advance that his right laudible purpose, and the more willingly for that this his enterprise is grounded upon an honest intent to establish trade of merchandize with your subjects, and with other strangers trafficking in your realms. Wherefore we have thought good both to write to your Majestie, and also to desire the same to vouchsafe to our request to grant to our saide servant Anthonie Jenkinson good passports and safe conducts, by meanes and authority whereof it may be free and lawful for him, together with his families, servants, carriages, merchandize and goods whatsoever, through your realmes, dominions, jurisdictions, and provinces, freely and without im-

peachment, to journey, goe, passe, repasse, depart, and tarry, so long as he shall please, and from thence to returne whensoever he or they shall thinke good. If these holye duties of entertainment, and sweete offices of naturall humanitie may be willingly concluded, sincerely embraced, and firmly observed, between us and our realmes and subjects, then we doe hope that the Almightie God will bring it to pass that from these small beginnings greater moments of things shall hereafter spring, both to our furnitures and honors, and also to the great commodities and use of our peoples; so it will be known that neither the earth, the seas, nor the heavens, have so much force to separate us, as the godly disposition of natural humanitie and mutuall benevolence have to bind us strongly together. God grant unto your Majestie long and happy felicitie in earth and perpetuall in heaven. Dated in England, in our famous citie of London, the 25th day of the month April, in the yeare of the creation of the world 5523, and of our Lord Jesus Christ 1561, and of our reigne the third."

I cannot trace any good results arising from this mission. In 1626 the question was again taken

up by James the First, when Sir Anthony Shirley was sent out to establish mercantile relations with Abbas the Great, who received him very courteously, and said, "that he would deliver in Gambroon ten thousand bales of silk (nearly one million of pounds weight), and take in exchange English cloth." I cannot find, however, that this led to any established intercourse between the two kingdoms; a circumstance arising principally, I believe, from the uncertain fortunes of this country, whose history offers us a succession of civil wars. The jealousy, however, of the Armenians, who had been always the trading community of the East, and also that of the Russians, had, no doubt, some share in the matter.

In 1739, Mr. John Elton made his way into Persia, on the behalf of the British factors in St. Petersburgh. He was the first English merchant who ever carried goods into Persia, and he gives a very interesting account of the difficulties he had to contend with in coming down the Volga, being exposed to pirates, &c., during his long and hazardous enterprise. He succeeded, however, in obtaining a decree in favour of the British merchandize from Riza Kouly Meerza, the then regent,

and son of Nadir Shah. This decree commanded the "Beglerbegs," or governors of provinces, to show every imaginable respect to English merchants, and afford them liberty "to sell to whom they please, without hindrance or delay."

Mr. Elton made known the success of his mission to the Commissioners of Trade in London, who presented a petition to the King, recommending "that this scheme for opening a new branch of trade to Persia, through Russia, may be very beneficial to this kingdom, and may deserve your majesty's royal protection." This alarmed the East India Company, as well as the Turkey Company, particularly the latter, who had profited largely by the sale of their cloths at Smyrna and Aleppo, from whence the Armenian merchants transported them into Persia. They, therefore, presented memorials on the subject to the Secretary of State, and these became the subjects of warm discussion in parliament, where it was made a question whether even the Turkey trade should not be thrown open to competition. An Act of Parliament was obtained for the Caspian trade, and British factors were sent into the north of Persia. The enactments of this Bill were intro-

duced by the following preamble:—"And whereas it may be of great advantage to this kingdom to open a trade to and from Persia through Russia, by promoting the consumption of woollen and other manufactures, goods and commodities thereof, if raw silk and other the goods and commodities of the growth, pròduce, and manufacture of Persia, be permitted to be imported into this kingdom from Russia, in return for such woollen and other manufactures as shall be exported from hence into Russia, and from thence carried into Persia, and not otherwise."

Four years afterwards, Mr. Jonas Hanway, that most respectable of British merchants, whose history I consult as the best authority on this subject, undertook the charge of a caravan of woollen goods for Persia, to the value of five thousand pounds sterling, on the behalf of the British factory at St. Petersburgh. Having reached Zaritzen, 680 miles from Moscow, he embarked on the Volga,—the town just named being situated on a high bank of that river,—which he describes as the most esteemed in the world for its depth and extent. The navigation he states to be sometimes difficult, on account of its being choked by trees

and other large bodies floating occasionally down the stream. The first town, situated midway, is Chernoyare, where he stopped, and then proceeded to Astrachan. The ordinary rate of the current he describes as being about one mile an hour, but in the time of floods it is of three times that rapidity. In the winter it would be difficult to navigate it until the month of March.

Astrachan is a large town, containing seventy thousand inhabitants, and is celebrated for its annual fair, where are congregated together people of all nations and languages. From thence he proceeded down the Volga to the mouth of the Caspian, to Astrabad Bay, which is on the south-east side, and offers a very commodious anchorage. Here having suffered immense difficulties, in consequence of a rebellion, his caravan being plundered, and himself in danger of being carried into slavery by the Turkomans, he departs for Balfruth, which he reaches in six days. There again he encounters extraordinary hardships, which are detailed in his simple and interesting narrative.

Continuing through numerous other dangers, he arrived at Lankaron, where he found Mr. Elton, and soon after proceeded on his journey to Kas-

vine, on his way to the Persian camp, in order to obtain of Nadir Shah reparation for his loss at Astrabad. This was granted by the following decree—"That I should give the particulars of the loss in writing to Behud Khan, the Shah's general in Astrabad, who had orders to deliver to me whatever part of the goods might possibly be found, and restore them in kind, and the deficiency to be paid out of the sequestered estates of the rebels, without delay, to the last denar."

I cannot trace any commercial intercourse direct between Great Britain and Persia until about ten years ago. In the meantime our manufactures were scantily supplied from India at an immense cost of transit, making their long precarious way subject to numerous duties, plunderings, and the thousand and one taxes, which made them prohibitory for general consumption. But the Persians were so attached to every thing English, that even at those high prices our manufactures found a certain though limited demand. The trade was deemed of sufficient importance, that when Sir John Malcolm arrived in Persia in the year 1810, he formed a treaty with the Persian government for its protection, which treaty no longer exists;

for in all despotic governments no treaties are binding on the successors. I have carefully examined its contents, to see how far its enactments might serve for a future treaty of commerce between the two governments. I need not glance at them, but will copy merely the preliminary compliments, since it shows the inflated style of the Persian writing.*

* "In the name of the beloved and great God (then comes the King's seal), the earth is the Lord's, our august commands are issued, that the high in dignity, the exalted in station, the refuge of power and glory, the noble, the great in authority, the chiefs of high nobles, the Beglerbegs, the Haukeims, the Naibs and Mossudies of the kingdom under our protection (who are raised by our royal favour), become acquainted that at this period the dignified and eminent in station, the prudent, able, and penetrating, the greatest of the exalted followers of the Messiah, Captain John Malcolm, deputed from a glorious quarter, from the government of the King of England, whose court resembles the firmament, an emperor in dignity, like Alexander, possessing the power of the globe, and from the repository of glory, greatness and nobility, endowed with arbitrary power and justice, the Governor-General of the kingdom of Hindostan, for the purpose of establishing union and friendship between the two great states, has arrived at our threshold, founded on justice, and has been honoured by admission to our royal presence of conspicuous splendour, and has expressed a desire that the foundations of amity and union should be laid between the two states, that they should be connected together in the bonds of friendship and harmony, and that a constant union and reciprocal good understanding should exist. We, from our august selves, have given

Of the subsequent trade of Persia, the imports of manufactures consisted principally of Russian fabrics, brought down from Teflis by the Georgian merchants, to the amount of nearly a million of ducats annually, paying an *ad valorem* duty of five per cent. These merchants were protected by a Russian consul,* and they throve in their traffic,

our consent, and have granted the requests of the high in rank above mentioned, and a treaty sealed with the seal of the minister of our ever-enduring government has been given to him; and you, the exalted in station, are positively enjoined of the necessity (after you become informed of our royal and august order), for all of you acting in strict conformity with the conditions of the treaty concluded and exchanged between the high in rank, the exalted in station, the great and glorious in power, near to the throne, in whom the royal confidence is placed, Hadji Ibrahim Khan, and the high in rank, the envoy, Captain John Malcolm (whose titles have been before enumerated); let no one act contrary to this high command, or to the contents of the annexed treaty, and should it ever be represented to us that any of the great nobles conduct themselves in opposition to the stipulations of this treaty, or are in this respect either guilty or negligent, such will incur our displeasure and punishment, and be exposed to our royal anger, which is like fire, and let them view this as an obligation.

" Dated on the ninth of Shauban, in the year of Hegira 1215."
(January 1801.) Signed by nine ministers.

* The consul's power to protect the property of Russian subjects is remarkably strong, of which the following is an instance. A merchant complained to him of one of his Persian debtors attempting to defraud him, and that he deemed his pro-

acquiring great wealth, taking back with them raw silk, skins, wax, &c. At this time, therefore, the bulk of the foreign trade of Persia was Georgian.

Subsequently, at the period alluded to, some attempt was made to establish imports from England direct to Persia, by the indefatigable exertions of an active and intelligent agent of Abbas Meerza, who when in this country established a correspondence with a large mercantile house in London; by which means direct intercourse was opened, and a vessel navigated the seas, for the first time in history, bearing British manufactures to the port of Trebisonde, their destination being the Persian market. This affair excited considerable interest in England. The boldness of the undertaking, and the skill with which it was conducted, did at one time promise to realise the utmost hopes of the speculators. But "it is not in mor-

perty insecure in his hands. The consul issued his fiat for immediate sequestration of the debtor's property, and without referring at all to the Persian authorities. A "kavass," or messenger, was immediately sent to the debtor's shop, the door was closed, the Russian seal put upon it, which even the Ameer, or Governor of Tabreez himself could not pull down; the claims of the Russian subject were then seized for, and the other creditors might help themselves to any thing that remained.

tals to command success;" though I may truly add that they "deserved it." It failed, however, for reasons on which I deem it unnecessary to enter.

This was the first time the port of Trebisonde had been ever resorted to as the highway to Persia. The navigation of the Black Sea had been dreaded by all navigators; the very name of "Kareh-denguis," or "the furious sea," was a bugbear to masters of vessels; in fact, it was only by one of its frightful storms (the vessel being nearly wrecked) that the port was first made, and which subsequently led to a British vessel being purchased, and navigated to that harbour, as already alluded to. The consequence was, that this sea, once deemed so formidable, was now found at the proper season to be a "pacific" one, and Trebisonde became by degrees the highway from Constantinople to Persia.

When I first visited this interesting city, I was told that no other Englishman had been there for twelve years before; and I found but one European consul. When I last visited it, British commerce had unfurled her flag there, under the protection of her consul; and the transit of goods from Constantinople, which had not previously

equalled a million of piastres (£10,000) per annum, was now equal to nearly a million of pounds sterling, occasioned by the Persian merchants buying British manufactures at Constantinople, and transporting them to their own country by this newly opened road.

This wonderful activity in commerce, receiving its impetus in the way I have described, has introduced large supplies of English goods into Persia, where some British merchants are now established, having their correspondents likewise established at Erzroume, protected by a British consul; while ramifications are springing up at numerous other points—such has been the result of this enterprising attempt; and although the continuity of it was broken, arising from uncontrollable circumstances, yet the credit is due to that genius and industry which first planned it.*

The Persians have a strong predilection in favour of English manufactures; but the present political relations between Great Britain and Persia are

* I could add much to the prospective advantages of a direct commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Persia, did not our present political relations with that country completely nullify all such advantages; and there are other pursuits in Persia which would open a large field for British capital and enterprise.

inimical to all commercial relations, and the want of a treaty to protect British merchants and their property, —which it has been often attempted to establish, but which the Persians refuse, it is said through the influence of Russia,—are circumstances which operate against a direct commerce between the two countries. But, looking forward to British supremacy in the Persian cabinet, I would say that such commerce might be established to the mutual advantage of both states. The minor points as to duties, protection and sympathetic interests must, of course, grow out of subsequent arrangements, to be built on a commercial treaty, the establishing of consuls, &c. Nor need I enter on the extreme caution requisite in dealing with a people, not only so sensitive to their own interests, but occasionally capable of commercial immorality. These are facts as notorious as the fervid sun that warms them; and their shrewd dealing is evinced, when I say that scarcely a Hebrew is to be found amongst them, and that even a Jew cannot live upon a Persian!

I will now briefly show what are the leading productions of Persia, on which a merchant might found his calculations of a barter trade. The prin-

cipal produce of Persia is raw silk, which was first introduced into that country from China. The province of Ghilan alone is said to produce more cocoons than the whole of Italy together. But the imperfect mode of winding by the natives, upon wheels of too large diameter, giving it very little twist, and the thread being gutty and uneven, this silk in the European markets of England and of France is in great disrepute, and is sold at an inferior price, under the name of "Persian silk." But even at this low price it is said to yield to the exporters a very large profit. By the introduction of European machinery and work-people, it is presumed that the greater part of these cocoons might be brought under the new system of winding. Indeed, from the information I have obtained in Georgia, it is clear that this might easily be accomplished.

The actual amount of the silk produced in Persia must be extremely uncertain, where no official returns can be consulted; the only data of calculation are the duties, which are principally farmed by individuals, and imposed arbitrarily. Including the province of Ghilan, and a part of Mazandaran only, I take a very moderate computation of fifty

thousand poods, or *two millions of pounds*, annually. Of this, Russia used to take one thousand bales, or three hundred thousand poods; but now they take much less, since they consume their own produce. A large quantity finds its way to Constantinople, where it is mixed with the "brusa" silk (to which it is very inferior), and exported largely to London and France. To India also partial exports are made, in return for colonial produce. I cannot guess as to the quantity in the latter case, having no data. From India it is sent to London, and sold at the Company's sales. The Georgian merchants take off a great quantity in barter for their goods.

These sources, added to the home consumption, are supposed to absorb the whole of the Persian produce of silk. The first sort, called "sharbaff, or weaver's silk," is estimated at one-fifth of the whole amount, and it is but of little more value than the second sort; its cleanness and gloss or brightness constitute its superiority. The white or silver colour is the most esteemed; but in Ghilan the greater part comes yellow from the worm. Between the second and the third quality there is a difference in value of about one-third. The fourth quality, called "derihot," is very inferior,

and never bought for exportation, being used for the common manufactures of the country.

The King takes his tithe of the province of Ghilan in raw silk, the quantity of which is very considerable; and there would be no difficulty in obtaining this amount from his agent for manufactures; nor indeed would there be any obstacle to absorbing the whole of the Persian produce in raw silk in this way, provided markets could be found in England or in France; and I deem it of the last importance to establish a source of sales for this valuable produce; since it secures *certain* sales in Persia to this amount; and even if *no* profit attends this export trade, it protects the British importers from risk, and furnishes them with immediate remittances.

But a magnificent enterprise might be established by *introducing the European mode of winding silk in Persia.* I have attentively observed the new plan adopted at Milan by an English house, and for which a patent has been obtained, called the "croissee," combining the winding and twisting the silk from the cocoons at the same time.

The produce of Persia consists likewise of opium, saffron, rhubarb, yellow berries for dying, nut-galls,

alum, arsenic, gum, cotton, rice, dried fruits, borax, hides, hare-skins, litharge, &c. &c. The Persians manufacture a few articles themselves, such as carpets and shawls, some of which are very magnificent. They make likewise some good silks, black lamb-skin caps, socks, &c. &c. A respectable powder-mill has been built about six miles from Tabreez, where they can produce from four to five hundred pounds of good powder daily.

It was some time since attempted to introduce the manufacture of cloth in Persia.* Mr. Armstrong, an Englishman, undertook it at the cost and request of Abbas Meerza. Fulling-mills were established at Khoie; and spinning, carding, and weaving machines, on the rudest principle, were made and put up at a small building a few hours distant from Tabreez. These I have seen, and the cloth likewise made on them, which was of the poorest description; though it may possibly answer in a small establishment of this description, if properly supported by capital and scientific industry, to the extent of clothing the prince's troops, and some of the lower orders of the people; for which

* The wool of Persia is very coarse. The sheeps' tails are unusually large, sometimes weighing from ten to thirty pounds.

the wool is peculiarly fitted. Until our indefinite non-de-script, abeyance state of relations with Persia are cancelled by friendly ties, commercial treaties, and active correspondence, this country offers no invitation to mercantile pursuits. It may then open a large field for direct imports of British manufactures, where Manchester industry and Liverpool activity may be exchanged for cachmere shawls, silk, and saffron; thus irrigating both soils with the riches of commercial entery rise.

ADVENTURES IN KOORDISTAN.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR G. Khoe, July 3.

Having promised to resume my correspondence from my resting-places, and being once more seated on the hard brick floor of the caravansery, I will retrace our short course to this place.

On Monday, the 28th ultimo, at seven in the evening, I took my parting farewell of Tabreez, with the Khan. The ceremony of leave-taking, being pretty nearly the same all over the world, needs no recapitulating. Our first stage to Mayane was only an affair of three hours; we were accompanied thither by some friends, and bivouacked under our tent. The evening was delightful, and

our road so odoriferous from the fragrant crops growing by the way side, that I had much enjoyment of it.

The Armenian priest having given us his parting benediction, we started the next morning for Defakaplane, an affair of six hours, the road being over a salt, arid country, and passing the ruins of many desolate villages, once the scene of contest between the Persians and the Turks. We made our way without incident, and the evening found us stretched on our mats at a very tolerable cottage, the owner of which, "a rysh soofeid," or "white beard," blanched with age and wrinkled with hardships, bore yet the semblance of heartfelt contentment, which I could not forbear to congratulate him upon: for content must ever be a subject for congratulation, whether it be clothed in rags or in the purple robe.

On the following morning we started, just when

> "Night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast;
> And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger,
> At whose approach ghosts wander here and there,
> Troop home to churchyards."

But ghosts saw we none, as we issued from our resting-place, to resume our journey.

Still a wild uninteresting country, partially bleached with salt. The lake of Ouroumia presently burst upon our view. The sight of any thing like the sea amid (if I may so speak) an ocean of plain was most grateful. This lake is very considerable.

We breakfasted by the side of a purling brook, stretched at lazy length, enjoying the luxury of unsophisticated rest. We then pursued our way to the village of Kurrakuppa, six hours distance. Many ruined villages, once seemingly of large extent, skirted the road. The village of Kurrukuppa was almost deserted, in consequence of the plague; only one or two wretched persons showed themselves, to caution us from entering; so we pitched our tent in a pretty piece of garden-ground in front of the lake, and enjoyed the luxury of repose.

On the following morning at four, to Seid Hadji, seven hours distance. The only novelty of this march was over a very fine and steep pass, cut out of the rocks at an immense height, which commanded an extensive view of the lake and the numerous hilly ranges with which the country was intersected. This village was prettily situated, and an abundance of water gave it the advantage of

rich pasturage and fine crops of corn, which the peasantry were then gathering. It is a custom on the approach of strangers to present you with a sheaf, and sing over it a welcome. This compliment was paid to us, doubtless to worm out some of our coin. Here we were accommodated in the Prince's hunting-box, which had been so despoiled by the Russians in 1828, that it was scarcely habitable. The country abounds with game, and when the Prince visits Khoe, it is his custom to take up his residence here.

In the evening we made another march of three hours, and met a caravan, with which we bivouacked, and proceeded very early the following day for Khoe. The approach to the town from this direction was much prettier than the country I had gone over the preceding year, being planted and well watered; numerous villages intersecting the way, and an abundance of garden-ground, rich in its produce. We arrived here in our old quarters yesterday morning, and having to remain the whole of the day, my pen and books are the only resources to which I can resort, to "feather the wings of time." The plague is said to be in the town, carrying off several persons daily. A Turk has just

been here to say that we had better by no means go on, for the Turkish troops have been defeated at Byazide, and there is every thing to apprehend from stragglers. *

Our Camp at Maliz-Ghird, July 12.

Here we are, stuck by the way, and by rather singular circumstances. But, not to break the thread of my narrative, I will go back to Khoe, which we left in the evening of the day that I wrote to you, after witnessing part of the ceremony very religiously observed by the Persians, of the death of Hussein, of which Henry Martin gives some report from Shiraz. The whole of the ceremonial I cannot enter upon, since it lasts ten days, and I witnessed only the first scene. †

At the village of Perah we met with rather a rough reception, the people fearing that we might infest the place with plague, and we were obliged to bivouac on the bare ground, which was well wetted with dew by the following morning. I was the more surprised at this, since the climate has been said to have *no dew*—such, at least, is the report of some travellers.

* This was during the Russian invasion of Turkey.

† See the Chapter on Persian Festivals.

The next day's march was an affair of ten hours to Zordava, sultry and fatiguing, with many a plague-tainted village to pass on the way, the frightened inhabitants of which had fled from the destroyer. One or two, on our approach, crept from their hiding-places, in a wretched state of misery.

In a luxuriant valley, hemmed around with a fine mountainous barrier, we came up with a large caravan of travellers, and pitched our tent amongst them. I can find no incident for you this day beyond the usual monotony of travel, which was at the rate of about three miles an hour.

The following morning we started before Aurora, for Kara Arnah (six hours), and here we came through a beautiful pass into Koordistan, on the Persian frontier. It was as wild and uncouth as its inhabitants are celebrated for being. But I can always luxuriate in the wilderness, and enjoy its romantic splendours. Here, by the noisy rill, our wallet was unburthened of its contents, and our morning meal washed down by the pure beverage of nature.

As I wound my way through crag and cleft, I found much to admire in this new country; but

of inhabitants we saw none—not even a goat—to dispute our passage. We passed through what is called "the Dark Valley," and reached uninterruptedly our bivouac, near the burrowed village of Alai Keni, which is so little above the ground that I could see only a few of what seemed respectable sized mole-hills. The country around was extremely wild; small valleys, completely shut in with their watery riches, issuing from the fantastic hills, which seemed to look down contemptuously on their narrow confines.

Presently a Turkish officer and a Koord came down one of those seemingly inaccessible mountains on horseback, to demand the cause of our intrusion, &c., which being satisfactorily explained, they soon disappeared. The usual business of tent pitching, and setting up our rest for the day, gives time a fillip, which the monotony of travelling sometimes renders not a little desirable.

We were summoned from our repose at the usual time the next day, which was generally

> "An hour before the heavenly harnessed team
> Begins its golden progress in the east."

We sprung into the saddle and reached Barghiri in six hours. The country now opened a new

page of interest; the varieties were more frequent, and on a smaller scale, being a succession of undulations, generally richer than the last day's surface. We met troops of Armenians, with their bullocks laden with corn to provision the Turkish army before Byazide, and one group consisted of an entire emigrating village, the various turning out of which must be seen to be conceived:—children in panniers on the bullocks' backs, goats and kettles, calves and carpets. The vacant stare of the Armenians, and the tattered garb of the females, with an attempt at finery with their nose-rings, armlets, &c., formed a grotesque group, far beyond my descriptive powers.

Here, from a rugged eminence, we first saw the Lake of Van, which at the distance looked boundless, and therefore very interesting. Previously to this we had passed one or two camps of the wild-looking Koords, in their miserable black tents. They were to be compared, in appearance, almost to the inhabitants of the lower regions; I computed them at four or five hundred in all. They would fain have held intercourse with us; but we kept them at bay by the musket, not so much from any dread of their hostility, as that they might not

infect us with plague. Never was this country, perhaps, more desolated than at present by that terrible scourge of the East. At a village which we passed, a poor man brought down his child for us to look at, which had recovered from the disease.

We crossed a once well-built Armenian bridge, which was now in ruins. I observed that the key-stones were marked with the cross, which seems to have been always the badge of this ancient people. Amongst some ruins which I explored, many a sign was observable of their Christian faith. This is very remarkable, since I understand their date to have been long before the cross was raised, or a Saviour known, except through the Prophets.

Here in this river, seemingly deserted by man, flocks of wild ducks held their domain, and troops of tortoises, which I traced to the water's edge. After expending a little powder and shot we were ready for breakfast, and with an appetite that can only be gathered by fatigue and the mountain air. I like these rural repasts, on the simple plan suggested by nature. How much better are they than your bloated surfeitings, which congeal rather than refine the blood of health.

An uninteresting continuance of road brought us again into the front of the lake of Van, and here we determined to bivouac.* In the course of the day a party of Koords passed near our camp, returning from Byazide, where we understood they had been defeated, after having made good their footing in the fortress, from whence they were finally expelled by the Russian troops. They did not molest us, but we deemed this a very critical part of our road, since it led to the seat of war, which was then raging; and we had every thing to apprehend from retreating troops, whose custom is, not only to plunder travellers and villages in their way, but even to plunder each other when they can find no other food for their rapacity. With defeat they associate in their minds the termination of all lawful government; waste and desolation then mark their steps, and destruction awaits those who fall in with them.

The following morning to the fortress of Ardiz, a respectable looking town externally, which we did not enter, but encamped in a meadow in front

* This lake is stated by the Armenian writers to be one hundred miles in length and sixty miles in breadth. Small vessels ply upon it, and there are several villages on its borders, not far from the city of Van.

of it; and a very pretty encampment we made, being surrounded by a fine river, and situated in the richest pastures, where man and beast seemed to luxuriate in every comfort. Our caravan consisted of about three hundred cattle, and sixty men, composed of various merchants conveying their wares to Erzroume; and it was deemed advisable, in these troublesome times, to make the party as large as possible, most of them being well armed. Great was the curiosity of some of the natives, at the Ferengee stranger who was lying down in the tent, and groups of people surrounded me, wondering at my boots, my spurs, and my tight coat; one of them every now and then advancing to ascertain by the touch whether I really was flesh and bones, or only composed of pipe-clay. I always on these occasions encouraged their timid advances to knowledge; stretching myself out for their examination, and inviting them near me; laughing both with, and at them; fraternising with them as much as was possible without the aid of language; and letting them see that I was a human being like themselves.

The character of the country is as I have before described; generally, rich and luxuriant patches

of green pasture lay between an amphitheatre of mountains, which frequently suggested the enquiry, "Where are we to find egress?"—this and ingress being through some narrow defile, which is lost to the eye immediately it is passed. A solemn stillness reigns around; not a tree or shrub is visible; and the proud barren hills, rising in solemn majesty, seem to say, "Who dares thus to intrude on our kingdom?"

At three the next morning we broke up our camp for Herazdown, a march of eleven hours. The early part continued to be on the borders of the lake of Van, over a rocky defile, where we met a miserable-looking "Cossett," as they are called in this country, being a foot-messenger sent from town to town, which they do in an incredibly short space of time, and endure fatigue beyond what a horse could do. My friend held a conversation with this man, as they sat quietly down together on a huge stone; and it was rather important information that he obtained. The messenger had advanced, four days before, very near to Erzroume, and saw the Russians surrounding it. The villages in the intermediate way had been plundered by the Koords, and he had himself fallen in with a

party of them, who had robbed him of every thing. Indeed, he was in a miserable plight. He advised us not to go on, the country being in so disturbed a state.

What was to be done? After having toiled on thus far, to retreat would look pusillanimous, yet to advance seemed full of danger, if our reporter could be relied on; so we adopted a middle course —that of retiring as much as possible from the high road, and seeking a more unfrequented way, by which we hoped to miss the marauders. In this way we pursued our course to Herazdown (eleven hours), along a weary way, half roasted under an eastern sun. The country was arid and uninteresting; but we established ourselves in a little nook near the mill, whose waterfall was a source of much riches to the immediate neighbourhood. The miller and his men were civil Armenians, seemingly very content in their obscurity, but showing much astonishment at the Ferengee stranger, as I moved through their domains. The sheik and the chief of the village came to visit us in our tent; and the latter was so much pleased with the attentions of the Khan, that he offered to accompany us on the morrow to the next station, saying that

there was a fortress of some importance, in which we should find safety if necessary.

We departed at four in the morning, and but very little interest attended our way. The country was more level than it had been hitherto, and the surface partially barren, partially cultivated. With the exception of one Armenian village, I do not recollect encountering a single living object until we neared the fortress, when we met a Tatar with four men going on to Byazide. He advised us to take an escort from the fortress, which he had no doubt the Agha would grant us, the country being overrun with Koords, and in a most dangerous state for travellers.

At two o'clock we welcomed most unfeignedly the fortress walls, being fatigued, heated, and exhausted, body and mind—so much so, that I shall bid you adieu until to-morrow's sun gladdens the scene, and freshens me for the continuance of my correspondence.

Yours.

LETTER II.

The Fortress of Maliz-Ghird,
July 13.

MY DEAR G.

EVENTS crowd upon me so fast, that I fear I shall grow confused in my narrative of them. But as you know I am a confirmed methodist in all my proceedings, let me trace matters regularly from our arrival at the fortress.

The Khan went to pay his respects to the Agha, whilst I remained under the walls on my horse, with some domestics, anxiously waiting his return. A crowd soon collected, eyeing me with much curiosity, and, as I thought, a sort of impertinence in their gaze, and with more familiarity than usual, pulling about my legs, my spurs, &c., as much as to say, "Now we have ye." But, as I had no speech for remonstrance, I kept my front firm

and determined. This, however, would not do long amongst a host of impertinents; so, after waiting half an hour, I made my way into the fortress, and at the gate was rudely repulsed with the term of "Ruski." I said in reply, "Ruski yoke—Inglesia." Still the fellow kept me at bay, and had not one of our men come up, I should scarcely have gained admittance. Having mounted a flight of stone steps, I found myself in the grand hall of the divan, a large straggling place, with an open balcony in front; but the floor was "of the earth—earthy." I soon spied out my friend at the upper end, and approached him uninvited; the staring senators on each side, squatted on the ground smoking, and astounded seemingly at my intrusion. But my plan is always to go forward; so I bolted on, unheeding this formidable looking assembly; for such it really was. I should think there were more than sixty in number, in their various Koordish costumes, flaunting with rags, and seemingly puffed up with consequential pride, as though mankind depended upon their sufferance. At the door stood a possé of armed guards, ready, as I thought, for any work, however sanguinary.

KOORDISH DIVAN AT MAIZ-GHIRD

Day & Haghe, Lith.rs to the Queen

I approached the Agha, and took off my cap to him; in reply to which salutation he gave me a cut across my shoulder with my friend's whip—a curious Koordish reception, I thought. But when the Khan told him, "By striking him you strike me," he became more civil, and I sat me down near him. The moment I glanced at his physiognomy I felt repulsed at the hard and coarse expression of his features, his grizzled motley beard, and uncouth appearance generally. I form much of my estimate of oriental character by the beard, and have always found that where it is long and flowing, it springs from a generous soil, where dwell candour, liberality, and enlightenment; but where the beard is short and stubby, of irregular and stunted growth, it invariably denotes an ungenerous nature, disfigured by ignorance, pride and malice.

I looked around upon the auditory, and, with one or two exceptions could entertain no better opinion of them than of the Agha himself. As they fumed away every eye seemed intent upon me; and I judged myself to be the subject of their conversation, from many a bitter look and significant glance. At length I began to feel it rather

awkward, that the divan should be occupied solely about me. But it would not do to show alarm on such occasions; so I looked as well pleased as I could, assumed an air of the utmost confidence, and was (or seemed, at least) quite at my ease. In the meantime the conference was going on very warmly between the Agha and the Khan, who at length said to me in an under tone, "I wish you had not come up. I have a great deal of trouble with this man; he takes you for a Russian spy, and will not grant us an escort, nor even allow us to proceed."

This was rather an awkward predicament certainly, and I puzzled my brain for expedients how we were to get out of Koordistan, a country which is very little frequented by European travellers, and would be less so, had they partaken of my disagreeable sensations. However, I took coffee with my new friends, smoked and laughed with them, as they almost turned me topsy-turvy while examining me; for when once my political character was established, I had to submit to all sorts of ridiculous inquisitions and enquiries.

After about an hour thus spent, the council broke up, and we were then led by one of the

Agha's men into a long gloomy looking apartment, with a small iron grated window, and requested to take our place on an old piece of carpet, horribly filthy and ragged. The man now held a long discourse with the Khan, which not understanding, I was ruminating on the various adventures of my oriental travel, when lo! and behold! two fierce-looking soldiers came in, armed *cap-a-pie*, and made their approach to me, followed by a third, bearing in his hand a long axe, as though he held the office of the Agha's executioner. There is a something in the appearance of ignorant wildness, when holding the means of their arbitrary power, which gives one a sort of awkward sensation, knowing that one may be the object on which to exercise that power. They approached and stood over me as their prisoner; and I shall never forget their barbarous grinnings, as one on either side, resting on their guns, looked down upon me with a sort of contemptuous feeling, as a victim to the caprice of their commander. The one with the axe, whom I took for the executioner, kept at a more respectful distance, and I could not but glance my eye at the edge of his weapon, to see if it was well whetted for its pur-

pose. But none of those things moved me from my self-possession. I felt perfectly composed, and merely observed to my friend, "Then it appears we are prisoners."

"It does appear so," was his laconic reply.

Fancy me stretched out on the mat, caught in the Koordish toils, amongst a race of utter barbarians, with an indefinite expectation every moment of something strange happening, but from not understanding their talk, wholly unable to guess what! My alleged crime was that of being a "Russian spy;" but the cause of these men's exultation was my being an infidel, wearing the badge of the Messiah instead of that of Mahomet: a fact which is quite enough, in their estimation, to justify your being wiped out of existence, without judge or jury.

My guards soon assumed that ignorant sort of familiarity which is intended to teach you their power. They sat down on either side of me, and again examined all the detail of my dress, which I talked about much to their amusement. In the meantime various messengers came in from the Agha; the outer room was filled with guards, at least sixty in number, and the whole garrison

seemed in a sort of feverish commotion, as though some grand event was about to happen. Our passports and Turkish teskerets, in the meanwhile, had been examined by the Effendi; but so ignorant was he, that he could not read the Turkish one with which I had been furnished at Constantinople. Another person was found, however, to prove by them that I was not a "Russian spy," but a free-born Englishman—a fact on which the Khan tells me I so often pride myself. Still the Agha said I was an infidel, and that was sufficient to justify him in detaining me for a time. Thus my fate was held in suspense during many conferences with my friend, whose never-failing resource of argument was tried to the utmost for my liberation—"If you detain him, you detain me; I will never move without him."—"But," said the Agha, "I have a great many troops in the garrison, and they all tell me that he is a Russian spy. You know how easily heads are taken off in Turkey, and by liberating him I shall endanger my own. I must detain him; but you may go when you please."

It appears that during this time the Agha had been meditating the plunder of the caravan, which

had proceeded about a mile off, across a bridge, over a fine branch of the Euphrates; and he had sent to a neighbouring chief to help him in the business. The Khan then offered him a large bribe to allow us to proceed; but he replied, "Why should I take four or five purses, when I can have the whole? It would be enough for me and my family, and I should go to Aleppo."

Thus the plunderer had no scruple to avow his iniquitous purpose. But the ingenuity of my friend worked upon him to defer it for a time. "'Tis true we are in your power; but recollect, the Persians are not only friendly with your nation, but there is every possibility of their aiding the Turks against the Russians, and I can get immediate assistance from Khoe, before you could possibly be off." This had great weight with the Agha, as well as the advice of the moolah, to desist from an act which would bring disgrace upon the fortress, and, ultimately, danger upon himself.

Osmond Agha wanted the caravan to return to the fortress for protection (as he said) against the Koords outside the walls. This my friend declined, and whilst he was standing at the grated

window, a shot was fired at it from below. Off ran the Agha, seemingly afraid of his own people; and presently one of his men ran in stripped of every thing, having been plundered by his Koordish brethren even under the very walls. More shots were fired, and a second man came in, in the same trim. You can conceive nothing like the confusion of the scene in which we were placed, the executioner and the guards still standing at the door waiting for orders, the very plunderers plundered amongst themselves, and we expecting every moment to share the same fate.

I went to the window to have a view of what was going on, and immediately a shot was levelled at me; but it rebounded from the wall harmlessly. I cannot convey to you all the detail of this afternoon's adventures—the noise, the uproar, the savage looking troops—the negotiations going on with the Agha for our joining the caravan.

At length a messenger came in to me to say, "You have nothing to fear;" so I concluded my liberation was at hand. My guards and the executioner now withdrew, and I was allowed to walk about the outer apartments, and to mix amongst the wondering throng, which I did

with the utmost *nonchalance;* and, being prevailed upon by a large bribe, the Agha allowed us to depart at eight o'clock for the caravan, which had proceeded some three miles off, on the other side of a ruined bridge over the Euphrates, and here we bivouacked for the night, keeping a strong guard against probable intruders.

Wearied out with anxieties and fatigue, I was glad enough to get out of my captivity, and to stretch myself once more on my own mat, where I found most refreshing sleep, after this long and anxious day of toil and danger.

Yours.

LETTER III.

The Fortress of Maliz-Ghird,

MY DEAR G. July 16.

I now resume the thread of our stirring adventures. We started from our camp at five o'clock on the Sunday morning, to make a retrograde movement; having been assured by the Agha that it was dangerous to proceed; of which fact, indeed, we had every indication around us, as already related. I should tell you that in the course of the night two messengers had arrived from this man to the Khan, bidding us to return, saying that there was great danger of our being attacked. But Ali would not allow his master to be disturbed. The motive for his sending will appear by and bye, as I have since learnt from my informant here in

the fortress. We had a sort of feeling that it was better to avoid passing the fortress if possible, and kept somewhat to the right, and were proceeding as we thought with extreme caution, having put the caravan in line, ourselves bringing up the rear. But just as we mounted the height of the village, we heard some guns fired, and a loud shout from the Koords; and on galloping up to the front, we perceived the servants being stripped and knocked off their horses, the muleteers being plundered, the caravan surrounded by a large body of armed men, and such a scene of confusion as is quite indescribable. Immediately we came in for our share of the attack. Three men surrounded the Khan, and three more surrounded me; one of the latter took hold of my bridle, another stood with a drawn sword on my right, and a third with his musket on the left, gave me such a thrust behind as almost to unseat me from the horse. Still I kept my saddle, and really I cannot but laugh when I remember the odd way in which I parried them off for two or three minutes, while waiting to see what the Khan would do—being determined, if possible not to yield.

The first things they robbed me of were my pis-

tols, before I had the power to draw them from the holsters. Being thus taken prisoners they led us towards the fortress, ordering me to get off my horse. I still kept on as well as I could, till another thrust behind, and a blow in the face, serving to dislodge a tooth or two, and the fierce-looking fellow with the sabre, wielding it close to me with the most menacing attitude, I thought it better to surrender at discretion, particularly as my friend was by this time on foot and in their power, and I saw them stripping him of his coats, his watch, and even his shawl. They then began to rifle my pockets, and turned out my powder-horn, water-flask, &c. I begged hard for my book; but the fellow, as if in contempt of me, threw me back the covers of it, and kept the inside. Then he demanded my great coat. This I resisted until the Khan called out, "Give up your coat." In the scuffle I lost my Persian cap; so you may fancy your poor friend in the wilds of Koordistan, surrounded by two or three hundred of these barbarians making the most horrible shouts, and going off with their booty in triumph.

By this time our servants came up. Ali made a good resistance, and was shot at by one of the

Koords; but the ball passed him and carried off two of the toes of one of the muleteers. This was the only casualty of the kind I have yet heard of. Six of the servants were likewise stripped of every thing, even to their shawls, their pockets turned out, and all their money taken, with numerous effects of guns, pistols, powder-horns, &c.

Fancy our party of eight, stripped of every thing, huddled together on the side of a rock, holding a council of war as to what we were to do for personal safety! Apprehending that the wretches might not be satisfied, and that our lives might next be sacrificed, we determined on retracing our way to Khoe on foot. The caravan was driven under the fortress walls, the muleteers dispersed, and every thing seemed to have become a prey to their rapacity, including our beautiful horses intended for England, on one of which I was mounted; but our thoughts were now only occupied about our personal safety.

Pursuing our march, we met the good moolah, Hadji Osman Millah Hussein, whose white turban I recollected to have seen in the Agha's divan. He stopped us, and said we must by no means proceed, or we should certainly be murdered—that a

party of Koords was waiting for us, being apprised of our intention to return. We then halted, and one of the robbers came up who had plundered me of my coat, and looking most fiercely at me, demanded my boots, saying that I was an infidel, and he would shoot me as he would a dog. The moolah reasoned with him, and asked "if he was not ashamed of being such a barbarian, who after having stripped me of every thing, now wanted to take my life?" and I may safely say that I owe my life to the interference of this good moolah, who seemed to compasionate very much our desolate situation; nor would he leave us, but continued to manifest his sympathy in every possible way. I think I told you that the Khan speaks all the languages so well—Turkish, Koordish, &c., that through him I could always learn the particulars of what passed.

Presently Osmond Agha came out of the fortress on horseback, with his numerous followers, and pretended that he had nothing to do with the plunder of the caravan—that it was done by the troops over whom he had no controul. He invited us in; and although we learnt that he had ordered the plunder, yet we thought it best to show some apparent confidence in him, and claim his pro-

tection, and that we should be safer within than without the walls. As I have learnt here from some of the Armenians, he regretted very much having allowed the caravan to go across the bridge on Saturday, and wished that he had made a plunder of the whole. To effect this he sent the messengers as before mentioned, to decoy us off in the dark, that he might better effect his purpose. Many debates were held amongst his people, whether they should attack us in our position or not; but it was argued that we were well armed, and our being on the other side of the bridge would enable us to make the better resistance. We had about fifty people in all—Persian merchants, muleteers, &c. Six of the latter made their way off, after being plundered, to Khoe; and by them we hope our misfortunes will be made known to our friends at Tabreez.

Thus we found ourselves once more in the fortress; and, as I glanced at my prison window, I thought of the scenes of Saturday, whilst the Koordish divan was sitting in judgment on the supposed Russian spy. Being destitute of every thing but our personal habiliments, we felt not a little our wretched plight, being completely in the

hands of these savage marauders, and unable to form any idea of our coming fate.

This being the first robbery I had suffered, I felt my situation to be not a little awkward; so distant from my native land, without any chance of judge or jury to redress my grievances. As I sat on my solitary mat ruminating on these things, crowds of people, troopers, &c., came around us, some of them seeming to commiserate our piteous fate. One of the latter sat down beside me, and tried his dumb efforts of condolence, by offering to cover my head with his turban; but I declined the badge of Mahomedanism, preferring a bald pate to this insignia of the impostor, though I felt grateful for his courtesy.

By and bye I spied the soldier who had robbed me, and pointed him out to my friend. He had the impudence to come and look down upon his victim with a sort of savage grin, as much as to say, "How completely I have stripped him!" But my feelings towards him were more of pity than of anger.

In the meantime our fortunes were improving, though we were unconscious of what was going on. A divan had been held by the Agha, who found

that the villagers had begun the plunder of the caravan, which was not only much to his detriment in the way of profit, but of credit also, since the blame would naturally attach to him. The sheik and the moolah represented what disgrace he had brought upon the fortress, by pillaging the property of a neutral power, and what risk he ran from the probable approach of the Russians; and this, added to the arguments of the Khan, that he should soon receive assistance from Khoe, as some of the muleteers had made their escape, induced him to change his purpose. The man seemed quite appalled with the force of these arguments, and ordered his troops to go out and protect the caravan, to enquire for our things which were lost, and restore them as soon as possible, assuring us that he would do his utmost to recover them. Then he held a council in our room; convened all the witnesses he could; and you would have been amused to hear the noisy vociferations—each giving his own story—accusing each other—rogue set against rogue by the principal rogue, himself!

At length he could keep no order amongst them; and in the utmost fury, sword in hand, the Agha was obliged to disperse them. Such a Koordish

court of justice I suppose was never before seen by any European. No language of mine can describe the wild, haggard-looking people, many barefooted, and flaunting in showy rags; armed, too, *cap-a-pie*, some of them with curious shields and lances, others with their girdles stuck round with old knives and buttons, pouches of all sorts, &c.

The good moolah, Hadji Osman Millah Hussein, who was my best friend in the group, came by my side, and consoled me with many a gesticulation; he likewise offered me his turban, and said that our effects would all be returned, and that we had nothing to apprehend. I always liked the appearance of this man from the first; generosity was stamped in his visage; and I could read the character which subsequently developed itself. During this time the spoils were being partly brought in, by the order of the Agha, and partly divided amongst the troops, a party of whom, in the other room, were at high words amongst themselves. At length many of the spoils being arrived, of guns, pistols, powder-horns, &c., I was called in to claim my gun, which I was not a little happy to see; but my pistols were not amongst the rescued plunder.

In the forenoon they fired their guns from the top

of the battery. This was to announce some good news from Erzroume—that the Russians had been defeated, or something to that effect; so ignorant were they of the real state of things, the Russian troops having occupied that city three days before.

I have to notice another Koordish friend, called the Effendi, whose office it was to write and translate for the Agha the passports, &c. He exerted himself much in my favour the preceding day, and endeavoured to remove, as far as possible, the idea of my being a Russian spy. This man had an open, pleasant countenance; and although dressed with ragged finery, he wore a good turban, &c. There is a something in sympathy which is gratifying, even if it comes from a savage, since it shows that the human heart is moulded by the same Divine Power, under whatever sky its owner may be born. An old dervish, too, with his figured scraps of the Koran upon his cap, who was also a member of the divan, was oftentimes on our mat, squalid with filth and rags; he was violently against me on the preceding day, saying, that "If I was English, I was equally to be dreaded as a Muscovite." This man was a native of Hindostan. "The English," he said, "had

come and stolen his country from him in India, and they were extending themselves to all parts of the world." But the Khan, by a bribe, silenced this man, and brought him over to be one of our strongest partisans! In this particular, I know of no one who studies and knows character so well as the Khan, adapting himself to each in their peculiar way; always ready to meet their arguments; flattering, coaxing, threatening, in turn. I am convinced that no one else could have extricated us from the numerous difficulties with which we were surrounded.

The Agha, still considering us as his prisoners, we had to obtain his permission to go to our camp, just outside the walls. This we did at six o'clock, and found the caravan formed as usual, and our tent in the middle. The refreshment derived from food and sleep, after all the toil and danger of long anxious days, I leave you to guess at.

Yours.

LETTER IV.

The Fortress of Maliz-Ghird,

My dear G. July 18.

The next morning, whilst preparing breakfast, the cry went through the camp, "the Koords—the Koords!" and then, for the first time, I learnt that we had enemies to fear as well from without as within. Immediately we barricadoed ourselves as well as we could, with some great stones planted around the camp, and the enemy kept their distance; we then went into the fortress to pay our respects to the Agha—this courtesy being politic even to a robber, to propitiate him as much as possible, since we were so completely in his power. Again we found the Koords in full divan, the hall of audience being crowded with

such a motley group as is perhaps seldom congregated together elsewhere. Osmond Agha was much more polite than he had hitherto been, and promised to return our visit on the following day.

In the morning we had numerous visitors, amongst whom were our two best friends, the good moolah, Hadji Osman Millah Hussein, and Hadji Mahomed. The former seemed to take me under his particular protection, saying, "We both proceeded from the same God, and I consider you as my brother." This was a wonderful stretch of liberality from "a true believer" (as they call themselves) to an infidel; and I felt not a little thankful to him for such proofs of a generous heart. The day thus passed on very pleasantly, and I was perfectly at ease, and, I may say, happy, even in our then ticklish position.

On the Tuesday we had numerous visitors again, so much did our camp excite the attention of those within and without the fortress. Amongst others, was Osmond Agha and his suite, which quite filled our tent. My friend kept up the utmost attention and politeness towards them, although we had reason to apprehend that they might plunder us the next hour. Indeed, I have

heard since my being here, that he had then invited two of the neighbouring chiefs to come down and assist him. He seems to have been afraid to take the odium upon himself of robbing us whilst we were under his protection; yet he would not allow us to move backwards or forwards, but held us as his prisoners.

Whilst these visitors were taking coffee with us, the alarm was again given—"the Koords! the Koords!" Up jumped the Agha, more frightened seemingly than any of us, and ran into the fortress, and the rest all dispersed in a moment. I leave you to judge of the state of this country, when the Koords within are afraid of the Koords without. The roofs of the huts within the walls were immediately covered with musqueteers, and small parties of them sallied out, but not to a great distance, to meet the threatening foe, against whom we were obliged to provide every night by a strong guard, lest they might pounce upon us. Still they kept at a distance, and allowed us another night's quiet repose. I scarcely ever permit myself to be disturbed in this particular, and I never slept more soundly than amidst all our alarms and dangers.

This brings me up to Wednesday morning, when

there was another cry of "the Koords!" but I had been so accustomed to it, that it now failed to move me off my mat. We had many troop visitors this day, bringing in our plundered effects by degrees. We thought it better to give out that we would purchase what they had, rather than leave them behind. Thus I recovered my powder-horn, coat, flask, &c. You would have been amused to see these savages grinning through their leather countenances, as they handled our coin in exchange for our own things. One of them in particular excited my attention, as in his curious survey of my dress, he enquired if my shirt-collar was made of paper!

The Agha was not idle this day; he seemed to long to pounce upon us; but shame or fear, or some other restraining motive, made him delicate in his roguery, so he did it by negotiation,—sending down a message by his trusty squire (who was worthy of his master, and whom we well plied with bribes to keep him quiet) to say, that the troops had applied to him for leave to plunder the caravan, that he had great difficulty to restrain them, and would not be answerable for our safety, if there was not immediately sent to him thirty-five purses of piastres (a purse contains five hundred piastres, or five

pounds sterling), with shawls and various things, of which he made requisition. Having a good deal of money with us, precaution was taken to put the greater part of it in the pack-saddles of the muleteers, and for which one of the most wretched horses was chosen, as not likely to run away, nor to be run away with.

It happened that the Khan had kept out for present expenditure about twenty-four purses, and this he offered to the Agha's agent, with three shawls, which, after some hours of discussion and difficulties, the man was prevailed upon to depart with. This was a civil way of robbery; and certainly we preferred it to the violence of a general plunder.

During this day we heard of the Agha's preparations for leaving the fortress. News had reached him of the occupation of Erzroume by the Russians, and the wretch then began to tremble for his own safety. My friend asked his permission to occupy the fortress after he had quitted it; but he seemed still very unwilling to lose sight of us, and pressed us to go with him for protection towards the lake of Van, on our return to Tabreez. But this would be the lambs travelling with the

wolves. Even our present precarious situation was preferable to venturing on the highways of plunder and anarchy.

This was a very busy day. We had numerous visitors, including our good friends the moolahs. One of them had rather an enquiring mind, and asked me, through the Khan, a variety of astronomical questions; amongst others, "was it true what he had heard, that the great globe turned round, or was it the sun?—he could hardly tell." I was endeavouring to explain to him the vicissitudes of the seasons, the day and the night, &c., and in the midst of my learned discourse, the cry was again heard—"the Koords! the Koords!" Up jumped my enquiring friend and the moolah, as though they had received an electric shock, and hastened to the fortress, to my infinite amusement, leaving the globe and the stars to their rotatory courses.

During this bustling day many reports were brought us of the intention to plunder the camp; amongst others, that the Agha had sent for two neighbouring chiefs to come down with more troops for the purpose. This kept us on the *qui vive*, and seemingly some crisis was approaching.

The muleteers became much alarmed, and even talked of deserting us, and we had therefore great difficulty in keeping up even an appearance of numerical force. At five o'clock a Koordish chief, with about fifty horsemen, came down the hill—a fierce-looking party of brigands, ripe for any thing; and within half an hour, another party of about double that number, came from another district, and entered the fortress. On enquiring of the Agha's agent about the arrival of these troops, he said that they came as an escort to conduct the Agha to-morrow to the lake of Van, as he was afraid of the neighbouring Koords. In the meantime they were scheming for the general plunder; and as rogues sometimes disagree amongst themselves, so it happened in the present instance; to which circumstance, as it should seem, we owed our lives.

At nine o'clock in the evening, three of the party came to visit us, including the chief, with the view of ascertaining the best way of making the attack, and to reconnoitre the victims of their cupidity. Always to treat them with the utmost civility was the best policy, and was adopted by the Khan, which, more than any thing, seemed to disarm the

barbarians. He entertained them with coffee and pipes, and seemingly placed the most implicit confidence in their friendship. For my part, I eyed them very narrowly, to endeavour to read our new companions, and fancied they were more the buccaneers of necessity than of choice. As usual, I was the great object of attraction and conversation. At length they took their leave, and then the chief of the other tribe, with his armed followers, came to our tent. I found him the fiercest-looking Koord of all my acquaintance. He was also entertained with the same civility, and asked numerous questions, and looked full of purpose.

You do not know what it is, I believe, to entertain the man who may be going to rob or murder you the next hour. It is rather an awkward sensation certainly; but it will not do to be too sensitive on such occasions. We found that, on his return to the Agha, as they could not agree on the subject of plunder, the design was abandoned. But the new Chief thought that as he had come all this way for the purpose, it was hard to give up the prize; so he said that he would plunder us himself. The Agha, fearing that he should get the disgrace without any of the profit, positively

forbad him to do so, and being the stronger of the two, it was his interest now to protect us.

The Khan becoming rather alarmed at this state of things, sent to the Agha for some troops to protect us, alleging danger from the Koords without. This he readily granted, for the reason before stated.

Our position now became rather critical; but, I do not know how it is, I can never bring myself to the anticipation of danger; so I lay down on my mat as usual, and slept most soundly until, at midnight, I was awoke by the Khan crying out to me—"Put on your boots—we are going to be plundered and murdered!" Rather an agreeable message, you will say, to be awoke with; but I deliberately did as I was bid, put on my boots, took my gun, and walked around the camp. Rounds of firing were going on against some unseen enemy; and it is said that there were two or three hundred Koords outside, concealed behind the stones, waiting to pounce upon us. From which we had most to fear, therefore, the Koords within or without, was a nice question—the chances being about even. The guards appointed to protect us might be in league with one of the chiefs

to plunder us; we could not tell, and had no resource but to wait quietly the result, and in the meantime, to assume a seeming confidence in our new troops, who kept up a running fire all night.

After waiting some hours, and seeing no immediate danger of attack, I returned to my couch, and slept again as before, being occasionally awoke by the noise of the guns. Thus passed over our most eventful night, and the return of morning brought with it a calm, which seemed to whisper to me—"Yea, though an host should encamp against me, yet will I not fear."

(In Continuation). July 19.

Our camp adventures are now drawing to a close, which you will not be sorry for; for I fear I fatigue you with my long detail. Having ascertained on the Thursday morning that the Agha would really quit the fortress that day, we prepared to enter it, and at two o'clock the mules and donkeys were put in requisition for our grand march of about fifty yards. Even whilst we were preparing, the mountain Koords hovered about us, and we were obliged to have an escort of the fortress Koords whilst the cattle were entering the gates. You may judge by these facts the condi-

tion of this wild country. Even a Turk observed to me, who was in the Agha's train, and lately from Constantinople, "You are come into a lawless country, where they are restrained by no government."

We arrived in the Agha's divan just as he was about to leave it; we exchanged courtesies, and pretended the greatest respect for this plunderer (my dear friend, what a world of duplicity this is, in which we are sometimes obliged to take a part!) He said that he had left a magazine of powder and of biscuits; but the only two guns of the garrison he took with him. In all the pomp and circumstance of his oriental dignity, which in these *would-be* grandees always amuses me so much, the Agha and his troops now evacuated the fortress; but they had great difficulty in clearing the gate, from the throng of Armenians which were pressing in for security. So great was the dread of the Koords outside, that it looked like a castle besieged; about fifteen hundred animals, man and beast, were thronging in at the small gateway, with such a clamour and pressure, that the scene beggars all description. Men, women, children, buffaloes, donkeys, all mixed up in one heterogeneous mass,

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Day & Haghe Lith.rs to the Queen

THE FORTRESS OF MALIN CHIRD

clambering and cudgelling, brawling and striving, until the very ribs of the castle seemed to yield to them. It was at least five hours before the whole of the caravan came in, and the noise and confusion began to subside.

During this pressure the Khan's greatest anxiety was evinced to save an old yaboo—the horse already alluded to. I could not, at the time, imagine why this was deemed more important than his fine saddle-horses—not knowing that it was so richly freighted. At length it was announced that they had succeeded in getting the horse within the gate; but in the extreme pressure he had been trampled to death—"Bring in the pack-saddle," said the Khan. The booty was secured, the animal flayed, and the skin made use of against our enemies.

I witnessed the scene from the balcony, which was very lofty, and thought that many lives must have been sacrificed to the eager haste of those wretched Armenians to find shelter within the citadel. I endeavoured also to trace some of the indications of character. One woman, finding that she had no chance of getting in herself, popped her child on the shoulders of another, that the infant might be saved, whatever might become of

the mother. Towards the evening a poor invalid was brought in his blanket, borne by four men, desirous, seemingly, of dying in peace.

At eight o'clock we began to breathe a little from our fatiguing toil. The Armenians elected the Khan for their chief, and then he had to organise his new government, to ascertain our means of defence, &c. The whole of the arms that we could muster amounted only to seven muskets. These were intrusted to the most valiant looking men; the rest were armed with scythes and clubs, to the best of their ability. Fancy us then established in the Agha's divan. What a change of fortune had taken place within a week, —being ourselves the governors where we had formerly been the plundered and the prisoners!

I made the round of the citadel to see what our new subjects were composed of. The whole of the court, the walls, the roofs, the ruined towers, were occupied with groups of living creatures, man and beast, mixed up together; and, I may say, I never saw such a mass of human rubbish as our garrison was composed of. The noise, the confusion of their arranging themselves for the night, was most amusing. At ten o'clock, we made the survey of

the outer walls, to appoint the guards, the signals, the fires, &c., to keep off the Koords, a small party of whom appeared soon after we got within the gates, and we fired on them from the balcony. So very barbarous are they, that an Armenian family coming in just at that moment, they attacked them, shot one man, who is since dead, and cut off the ears of another, because they could find but little plunder.

We passed the night uncommonly well, stretched on the ground miscellaneously; and this being the first time I had slept within a besieged fortress (for so this may be considered from our numerous foes without), I was lucky in being only awakened occasionally by the noise of the guards. The next day we had to enter upon our new duties. Having taken upon myself the police department, I had to make the survey of our dominions. The outer walls are very extensive, sufficient to enclose three thousand Armenian families, who, in their small burrowed hovels, appear to be in a wretched state of misery. Numerous ruined towers and battlements bespoke its having been the object of formidable attacks, principally, I understand, from the Persians, and frequently from the neighbouring

pashas, when the rebellious governors would not acknowledge their authority. It is the most considerable place in Koordistan, and was formerly the capital of three hundred villages, which rapine and strife amongst the Koords have very much reduced. I found out the baths, the dungeon, the magazines, &c.; and really, some of the ruins were so very respectable as to bear the stamp of excellent architectural taste. I attribute these to the time of the Armenians, before the conquest of this country by the Toorkomans, since I discovered many stone coffins, with the cross, and other devices of the Christian worship, still very evident upon them. It struck me that there must be some scope for antiquarian research. I therefore hired my guide, and the above were the results.

Fancy me now full of my important duties; the people staring at me in all directions, wondering who and what I could be, many of them never having seen a Ferengee before; pulling me by the coat, and gazing at my novel costume. I should tell you, that our subjects were made up from many villages, independent of the people from Maliz-Ghird, and they are governed by their local chiefs, chosen, I believe, on the same

principle that the Israelites chose the son of Kish, because "from his shoulders and upwards he was higher than any of the people."

The Khan, immediately on entering this place, had despatched a letter to the General Paskevitch, at Erzroume, saying that he was established for the time in the fortress of Maliz-Ghird, requesting his Excellency would be pleased to send us some troops immediately, not being certain of retaining it for a single day against the Koords, &c. In the morning, the Khan held an Armenian divan, to consider of the internal affairs of his government, and to make arrangements for preserving order, security, &c.; and you would have been amused to see how this divan was composed of bare-footed, ragged, empty-looking senators, which would have formed a fine group for a Hogarth. I thought the Khan looked rather ashamed of his new subjects, and therefore declined sitting in council amongst them.

During this day, Osmond Agha and his party had moved from their station of the preceding evening a short distance off, and seemed hovering as though reluctant to give up the prize of the caravan, or to quit his territories; but now we

could set him at defiance from his own fortress, and were determined to resist if any attempt was made upon it. In the evening he sent two men to reconnoitre, with a message that he wanted some coffee and tobacco, which we sent him. Probably these men seeing our state of defence, made a report which induced them to move off the next morning, abandoning his two guns, which were taken possession of by another Koordish chief.

On Saturday we had a rebellion amongst our own subjects, who are the most unruly set I ever saw. Those from the different villages began quarrelling, on some idle dispute about forage for the cattle, and soon clubs went to work, with most amusing variety. I never saw better single-stick, nor better fighting. The women began to shriek, the cattle to bellow, and the most uproarious confusion bespoke quite an *émeute* in our garrison. Reading the riot act from the balcony would have been of no use; so we were obliged to fire upon them, and this had the desired effect of dispersing the mob.

My police influence being thus set at nought, I soon resigned my seals of office, since, without Bridewell or tread-mill, I had no chance of en-

forcing my decrees with such a barbarous multitude of insurgents. I took upon me, therefore, the military department, as adjutant-general, and was obliged also to act the doctor; for one of the wounded men was brought in from the fray, his head terribly cut by a bludgeon, and his family surrounding him in dreadful agony, lest it might prove fatal. All my knowledge of the medical art consisted in the Sangrado system, but I looked around for some instrument of operation. "Knock him on the nose," said I; this done, it spared me the trouble of bleeding; and as to warm water, I ordered immediate potations within and fomentations without, which had the desired effect. My medical skill was then at a high premium, and they lauded me with their "Marshallah," &c. But I shall not initiate you into it; suffice it, that under my directions, assuming a little of the professional consequence, thus inspiring the utmost confidence in my patient, which is the best of physic, I turned him off his mat the next morning sound as ever.

The Sunday was a quiet day, perfectly devoid of alarms from within or without. Therefore, for their good behaviour, their chief invited some of

his Armenian subjects to dine with him. About sixty of them squatted down in the hall of the divan, the floor of which was composed of earth, except a narrow part near the balcony, where we established ourselves. Each brought his platter; the knives and spoons, need I say, are those of nature's furnishing; and they mouthed it away very respectably for Armenian breeding; and what pleased me most was their substitute for *Non nobis,* which they sung with all their power of lung, after dinner.

I shall now conclude this long letter, which, with my books, has formed my only amusement lately. It is very uncertain how long we may be detained here, and we have no chance of escape to look to, but the arrival of the Russian troops.

Yours.

LETTER V.

Fortress of Maliz-Ghird,
July 24.

My dear G.

Our garrison has been again rather feverish; even the muleteers it is difficult to keep in order. They are weary of waiting here so long, and our new troops are getting tired of their duty. It is rather difficult at night to keep up the watches, and establish the necessary surveillance against the enemy.

On Tuesday we had an accession of forces of two hundred Armenians from another village; they all find that there is no security out of the garrison. These Armenians are the most uncivilised of any I have seen. Their principal riches consist in their

cattle, of which they seem to make a sort of domestic companions, washing them very carefully all over, morning and evening, with their hands. They have but little taste for agriculture, though this country offers the greatest encouragement for it. Here and there beautiful rich patches may be seen, where the slightest cultivation has produced abundant results. I have scarcely noticed any tree or shrub throughout the whole of Koordistan. The view around here is wild and broken; on one side a high mountainous barrier, and on the other, a very wide branch of the Euphrates, over which is a fine old Armenian bridge, some parts of it scarcely passable. As I take my evening stand in our balcony, watching the setting sun, I trace its last rays merging in the crystal expanse, with a sort of melancholy feeling, whilst thinking of my friends in England, the immense distance which now divides me from them, and the probably long period that may elapse before I revisit Ferengistan.

But truce with reflections; I am now busied with realities, and it is the part of wisdom to make the best of them. To mark to you the vigilance of one of our guards, on Tuesday evening he espied

a suspicious-looking man outside the powder magazine; he fired at the man, and killed his dog. The man had a lantern with him, and he avowed afterwards that he meant to destroy us all, by blowing up the powder magazine. Having confessed this, he made his escape.

On Wednesday, a Koordish spy made his appearance within our garrison, and I thought the Armenians would have torn him to pieces. He could give no good account of himself, and was consequently consigned to durance vile, to reflect on his temerity. But the fellow had the ingenuity to escape the next day.

On Thursday, we received a message from our good friend the moolah, to say that we were to be attacked that night by one hundred and fifty musqueteers and fifty horsemen, and he cautioned us to be on the *qui vive.* I wondered how Hadji Osman Millah Hussein had sprung up again in our neighbourhood, since he departed with Mahomed and Osman Agha. Then I learned that the latter had returned to Mouch, from whence he came, being a creature of the pasha of that place; but the moolah, belonging to some of the

Koordish villages, had gone to his own tribes. His kindness hovered over us even at that distance, and we considered his message well worth attention; so we immediately set about examining the walls again, and filling up the breaches with huge stones, stopping the gaps of door-ways, securing the gates by stone plantations within; in short, I cannot tell you half the devices employed in this my first practical lesson in the art of fortification, my previous knowledge being derived only from my Uncle Toby's siege of Dendermond—with his scarp and counter-scarp, &c. Fancy me from the balcony, with all the importance of my military duties, issuing my orders—

> "Hang out our banners on the outward walls,
> The cry is still—they come!"

However, we made good our defences as well as we could; set the men on the alert, doubled the watches, &c., and then looked out anxiously for the Koords. But of Koords came there none; so we considered ourselves now perfectly safe, and that they were afraid to attack us.

Amongst other ingenious devices, the Khan ordered a wooden gun to be made; a most respectable

piece of ordnance, I assure you it was—a twenty-four pounder — which we kept at the gate in hostile array against all threatening intruders. This magnificent piece of ordnance would have attracted great attention even amongst the Park guns. It consisted of the trunk of a tree hollowed out, and swathed well in the horse's skin alluded to, and mounted on a carriage quite as rude; our shot was of great stones, and a most respectable report it made. The moment the horsemen were seen in the distance, the "topchee" gave them a salute; it had a wonderful effect, even to scatter the redoubtable Koords: in this way it served us most essentially. The Khan's exertions are, in fact, indefatigable; and so curious are his expedients, that I would say no difficulties can conquer him.

This is now the tenth day of our imprisonment, and we are getting uneasy at having no letter as yet from the Russian general at Erzroume. It is rather a tiresome life; "hope deferred maketh the heart sick;" and though we spin out, as well as we can, the long and weary hours by the aid of our books, &c., yet it is sometimes rather difficult "to

feather the wings of time." We have been ascertaining to-day, as nearly as possible, the total losses occasioned by this Agha plunderer, including small sums from the muleteers, our servants, their guns, our pistols, shawls, and a fine horse, which one of the robbers took a fancy to; and I find that they amount to a very serious sum—several thousands of piastres.

Yours.

LETTER VI.

MY DEAR G. Erzroume, August 13.

Here we are once more at Erzroume, and have been since the 1st of the month, safe under Russian protection, and enjoying the pleasure of European society, free from Koordish alarms, or any other of those travelling difficulties which have so long attended us, and in the tranquil enjoyment of that ease which can only be appreciated by those who have for some time known the contrary. But I must conduct you regularly on the way, and not ask you to take so wide a leap as from Maliz-Ghird to Erzroume.

On the Monday morning we were surprised by the arrival of a pasha, and eight or ten horsemen,

and as they came peaceably, there was no objection to admitting them into the citadel. They came on a mission from General Paskevitch to some of the Koordish chiefs, inviting them amicably to take steps for restoring their country to some sort of tranquillity, and intimating that they would otherwise be visited by the Russian troops. From these people we learned that there was no present chance of any aid from Erzroume. We therefore deemed it prudent to lose no time, but avail ourselves of their return to accompany them.

The bustle of departure, and arranging with the Armenians, &c., who were very unwilling to part with their chief (so much so that I feared they would have forcibly detained him), occupied us the whole day; and we stole out of the garrison, caravan and all, at ten o'clock at night, favoured by a tolerably thick obscurity. We had now to pass through the most dangerous of the Koordish territory—the part from whence we were threatened to be attacked; night travel was therefore indispensable.

We accomplished the first stage to Kara-Kroban, an Armenian village, by ten the next morning, without stopping by the way, and without casualty

of any kind. Some part of the road was extremely difficult for the cattle, being narrow rocky passes, seemingly so defended by nature as to leave travellers completely in the power of those who might occupy them. In one of these was a sort of Koordish village, which our guide pronounced to be the most dangerous place, calling it the "Black Valley." I do not think that even the Russian troops could have protected us from a Koordish attack: fortunately, however, we sustained none. The villagers at Kara Kroban were all in arms at our approach; for they had themselves been attacked by the Koords; and we were cautioned once or twice on the way to be on our guard against them. Here we luxuriated in a degree of security that had been unknown to us for some time. The situation was prettier than any thing I had seen in this country; with an abundance of water, producing its never failing result of abundant riches. The villagers were harvesting; and every thing wore an air of pastoral gaiety, so different from the wild deserted regions which we had been for some time traversing, that I once more felt quite happy, as in lazy length I lay stretched by the water-side, to watch the setting

sun, thinking partly of you, my friend, and your enviable lot, placidly treading the flowery vale of life, whilst I, having determined to take a glance at the great world, have been tossed to and fro' by many a storm, and know not how many more may await me.

In the evening, some of the Armenians came to us from Maliz-Ghird, to say that, the morning after our quitting it, a party of thirty Koords came down, and drove off all their cattle that were outside the walls, but made no attempt on the fortress.

We started on the Wednesday morning, at four o'clock, for Kouzli, an affair of six hours, which were unmarked by any incident beyond the usual monotony of travel. The land was richer than heretofore, and quite odoriferous, being thickly strewed with the most beautiful herbs and flowers —a regular piece of garden ground. The villagers were alarmed again, as usual; and two or three, on horseback, came forward to demand our quality, &c., with which being satisfied, they escorted us to the village, from whence we took our departure in the evening for our camp, a little way off, where we bivouacked in the open air.

Our next day's ride, to the village of Koulli,

was over a very wild mountainous country, partly enriched with pasture, and partly of a very barren and inhospitable character. We encamped on the banks of the Arras, a small branch of which fertilized the neighbouring country, and refreshed so much both man and beast for the time, that we tarried there. We sent to the village for provisions, but it appeared to be almost deserted. One poor inhabitant came to us, and said that it had been visited by the Koords only three days before, who had stripped him of every thing, even of his two sons, and he implored aid to relieve them from slavery. It appears that these wretches, when they can meet with nothing else, capture the children, and sell them as if they were cattle.

On the Friday, almost in the dark, we crossed the Arras at a shallow point, and continued our varying way over a picturesque and mountainous country, but very desolate, not a human being to be met with. We passed other villages, which had been quite abandoned by the terrified inhabitants on the approach of the Koords. In a very rich vale we once more encamped, though our march to-day was short, not exceeding five hours.

The last stage to Erzroume was now at hand,

and it being one of no trifling length, we got into the saddle this evening at eleven o'clock, to complete our long and wearying journey, or rather to reach some fixed station on the way. I have become quite fond of midnight travelling, particularly on account of one's missing the miseries of the noon-day heat.

As the opening dawn lit up our way the mountains were magnificent. This part of Koordistan is, in fact, by far the grandest of any I have seen; but still totally devoid of tree or shrub.

The ascents and descents of the route occasioned this day's march to be very interesting to me; but I cannot tarry to tell you all that I saw and felt. You must go on with me at once to the suburbs of Erzroume, where a small camp was established, for the purpose of enforcing quarantine. Here I first saw the European troops; nor did it matter to me whether they were English or Russian; I felt a sort of immediate protection, which you must have travelled through a lawless country properly to estimate. So strong was this feeling, that I could almost have embraced my European brethren, although they kept us the whole day waiting the pleasure of the general, and the visit of the doctor.

I found it, nevertheless, a day of negative enjoyment, and highly interesting in some particulars; for many squadrons of troops came in from Teflis, and two or three generals in their carriages, with all the amusing bustle of military movements. It was so long since I had seen such a sight, that (such is the force of temporary absence) I verily believe I looked around me with as much curiosity and delight as some of our domestics, who had never seen any thing of the sort before.

In the evening the doctor of the camp visited us. He was an Italian, and very polite; he examined our passports, and ordered every thing to be procured for us, including forage for our horses. A tent was put up purposely for our accommodation, and indeed, every attention was paid us that could have been shown to Russian subjects. The doctor promised to see us again in the morning, which he did, with a request from his excellency, the Count Paskevitch, that we would visit him. An officer was sent to conduct us, and at ten o'clock we set out to pay our respects to the general-in-chief.

As I rode through the streets to the citadel, I could not but contrast the then appearance of the town with what I had seen it last year; most of

the bazaars and the cafés closed; very few Turks to be seen, and those unarmed, and with a gloomy thoughtful tread, seeming to spurn the very soil which, only twelve months before, they went over almost like monarchs of the human race. The Turks are naturally a fierce-looking, proud, austere people. The Sultan's title, which I translated for you, and every item of which his subjects most cordially believe in, gives some idea of their character. To disarm a Turk is the greatest insult which can be offered him; they pride themselves very much on their girdle and pistols, the atagan, &c., and now I saw them with empty girdles; what a change for the haughty Musselmans!

In the seraskier's palace, within the citadel, the general had established his head-quarters, with all "the pomp and circumstance" of triumph about him; the Russian troops on guard, and in the court a body of them drawn up, and, to say truth, as fine a corps as I have almost ever seen. I believe no foreigner, certainly no Englishman, had ever before seen the haughty Turk's palace at Erzroume guarded by "infidels;" for ever since the days of the Romans, no invasion of this soil by Europeans has taken place.

We were conducted through two or three long antiquated rooms, lined with troops, with officers dressed in costumes of all descriptions—Georgian, Persian, Circassian, &c.; for the Russians have foreigners of almost all nations in their service. We were then conducted to the large saloon, or hall of audience, which was filled with officers, glittering in their stars and orders. The scene looked more like a prince's levee than that of a general-in-chief.

My friend the Khan, who is equally at home wherever he may be, either in a Koordish divan or a European assembly, soon recognised many of the officers who had known him during his Russian travels; and he joined in their talk, and received their greetings, as one of the band of brethren of this world's society. The courteous reception and polite attention of the general could not have been exceeded, had we been his compatriots. He enquired about Maliz-Ghird; acknowledged the Khan's letter; said he had sent troops to escort us; and then ended the conference by requesting us to dine with him at two o'clock.

We did not fail to accept this invitation, and

were most agreeably entertained at the Russian mess. The party was very numerous, and though not accustomed to military society, I derived much amusement from the scene; for my neighbours were full of conversation, and were exceedingly amused at the Khan's description of Osman Agha.* The general language of the table, I should tell you, was French.

After dinner, the General again addressed us, enquiring what were our plans and wishes with respect to our journey, and that he would be happy to facilitate it in any way by passports; and adding, that he considered Teflis to be the only safe road open to us. We then acknowledged his many civilities, and respectfully took leave, having previously received his permission to domicile for a time in the town; and accordingly, here we are, once more in our little harem apartment.

To proceed to Constantinople every one deems

* On the Khan's return to Tabreez, he succeeded in summoning Osman Agha to the presence of Abbas Meerza; whether he decoyed or frightened him, I never learnt. The Prince, indignant at the insult shown to his Envoy, was pouring out the vial of his wrath, ordering the immediate punishment of the bastinado; when the Khan interceded, and the Agha was pardoned.

impracticable, the dangerous state of the country having cut off all travelling; indeed, we are told that we should risk our lives by attempting it. In the present state of affairs it is impossible to make any definitive arrangements. We are thankful to find ourselves in security again, and shall enjoy that security for a short time during our stay here. Should I find any incidents deserving your attention, I will write to you again. So far as we can anticipate our movements, the Khan talks of returning to Tabreez; whereas I propose to make my way over the Caucasus.

Yours.

APPENDIX.

ITINERARY OF TATAR JOURNEY FROM TREBISONDE TO TABREEZ.

To Gevaslic . . .	4	hours.
Karacaban . .	4	
Gumish Kaneh .	8	
Balahou . . .	8	
Baiboot . . .	3	
Karagulah . .	4	
Ash Kaleh . .	8	
Erzroume . .	6	
	45	hours.
To Hassan Kaleh . .	3	
Delli Baba . .	6	
Toprah Kaleh . .	8	
Youngali . . .	6	
Diadin . . .	6	
Avajek . . .	8	Persian village.
Kereny . . .	6	
Ali Shah . . .	2	
Khoe . . .	4	
Zangera . . .	3	
Maran . . .	3	
Tabreez . . .	5	
	60	hours.

From Trebisonde to Erzroume, about	200 miles,	may be done in .	3 days.
From Erzroume to Tabreez, about	450 miles,	may be done in .	4 days.
Together .	650 miles,	may be done in .	7 days.

Expenses already stated.

EASY STAGES FROM TREBISONDE TO ERZROUME, OWN HORSES.

To Gevaslic . . .	6 hours.	
Besh Kelisia . .	8	Caravansery.
Ordessa . . .	5	
Teki . . .	6	
Altem Dosh . .	8	
Baiboot . . .	8	
Musatt . . .	6	
Cushapara . .	8	
Purchuke . .	5	
Erzroume . .	5	
	65 hours.	

This is the lower road, part of which is very beautiful, though not passable in the winter. The caravanseries offer but wretched accommodation. The other stations are villages, with plenty of food. If with loads or caravan travelling, it will require more time, say 75 hours.

ITINERARY FROM TEHRAN TO TABREEZ.

To Sulimania . .	8 furseks.
Kishlock . . .	10
Kerishkeen . .	8
Koramdereh . .	9
Sultaniah . .	8
Zenjan . . .	9
Armakaneh . .	9
Arkand . . .	8
Miana . . .	8
Karehchummun .	8
Hadji Agha . .	7
Bostmich . .	8
Tabreez . . .	4
	104 furseks,

Or about 450 English miles.

It is sometimes reckoned as so many hours: four miles in the hour is good travelling with the same horses.

There are many villages which may be branched off to, to vary the road. Thus, from Sulimania to Abdullabad and to Siadeen, from thence to Koramdereh.

Again, from Miana to Toorkamanchai.

- - to Tickmadash.

- - to Syeed Abad.

- and to Tabreez.

I have gone all the roads, and prefer the former.

Itinerary from Tabreez to Erzroume.

To Mayan . . .	3 hours.	
Deezek Kaleh . .	5	
Tassooch . .	6	
Khoe . . .	9	
Ali Shah . . .	8	
Kereney . . .	5	
A'vajek . . .	8	last Persian village
Byazide . . .	5	Turkish town
Diadin . . .	8	
Mongressor . .	6	
Koupri Keui . .	6	
Toprah Kaleh . .	2	
Moolah Suliman .	2	
Dehar . . .	6	
Comasoor . .	9	
Hassan Kaleh . .	6	
Erzroume . .	6	
	100 hours,	

Or about 450 English miles.

This road may be also varied. Thus—

From Tabreez to Sofian.
- - to Maran.
- - to Khoe.
From Dehar to Delli Baba.
- - to Comasoor.

I have gone all these roads, and only find the difference of six hours in favour of the former.

Travelling Expenses.

With respect to the expenses of travelling in Persia, so much must depend on the liberality of the traveller, or the honesty of the servants who accompany him, that no rule whatever can be laid down for it. The cost of the Tatar gallop, with four horses, I have already stated, beside the necessary provisioning for the way.

From Tehran to Tabreez, being twenty days on the road, with four people and as many horses, I did it comfortably for twenty tomauns (about ten pounds sterling).

From Tabreez to Erzroume, about the same time and distance, nearly the same expenses.

The "yekdan," or saddle-bags, should contain coffee, sugar, tea, tobacco, rice, and any other dainty that may suit the traveller's taste. On the road he will find bread, eggs, fowls, and "yaourt," or sour milk. Meat will seldom be met with, unless he take a lamb from the flock, or a calf from the stall: this I have often done, hanging the remains to dry at the end of the pack-saddle.

An English bridle and saddle is indispensable to comfort; and the traveller must go well armed, a brace of pistols, a gun, and ataghan, being indispensable. If the traveller has any reading propensities, they will be very useful to while away his time at the resting-places. He may smoke at first in self-defence; but he will find at last that it supplies all deficiencies.

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The parliamentary papers referred to give the following copy of these instructions:—

"That the Persian government shall conclude an equitable arrangement with the government of Herat, and shall cease to weaken and disturb these countries.

"That the Persian government, according to the stipulations of the general treaty, shall conclude a commercial treaty with Great Britain, and that it shall place the commercial agents of Great Britain on the same footing, with respect to privileges, &c., as the consuls of other powers.

"That the person who seized and ill-treated Ali Mahomed Beg, a messenger of the British mission, shall be punished; and that a firmaun shall be issued, such as shall prevent the recurrence of so flagrant a violation of the laws and customs of nations.

"That the Persian government shall publicly abandon the pretension it has advanced, to a right to seize and punish the Persian servants of the British mission without reference to the British minister.

"That the Governor of Bushire, who threatened the safety of the British resident there, shall be removed; that the other persons concerned in that transaction shall be punished; and that measures shall be taken to prevent the recurrence of such proceedings."

Royal Firmauns.

" Preamble of a treaty between Futtee Ali Shah, King of Persia, and the Marquis of Wellesley, Governor-General of India, by Sir John Malcolm.*

" Praise be to God, who said, 'Oh, you who believe, perform your contracts, perform your covenant with God, and enter into covenant with Him, and violate not your engagements after the ratification thereof;' after the voice is raised to the glory of the God of the world, and the brain is perfumed with the scent of the saints and prophets, to whom be health and glory, whose rare perfections are perpetually chaunted by birds of melodious notes (angels), furnished with two, three, and four pair of wings, and to the highest seated in the heavens, for whom good has been predestinated, and the perfume mixed with musk, which scenteth the celestial mansions of those that sing hymns in the ethereal sphere, and to the light of the flame of the Most High, which gives radiant splendour to the collected view of those who dwell in the heavenly regions. The clear meaning of the treaty which has been established on a solid basis, is fully explained in this page, and is fixed as a prescription of law, that in the world of existence and trouble, in this universe of creation and concord, there is no action among those of mankind that tends more to the perfection of the human race, or to answer the end of their being and existence, than that of cementing

* This treaty was formed in 1800, at Sir John's first visit to Persia, and had reference to the Persians supplying a large force to protect the Honourable Company's territories from the incursions of the Affghauns.

friendship, and establishing intercourse, communication, and connexion betwixt each other. The image reflected from the mirror of accomplishment is a tree fruitful and abundant, and one that produces good both now and hereafter. To illustrate the allusions that it has been proper to make, and explain these metaphors worthy of exposition at this happy period of auspicious aspect, a treaty has been concluded between the high in dignity, the exalted in station, attended by fortune of great and splendid power; the greatest amongst the high viziers in whom confidence is placed, the faithful of the powerful government, the adorned with greatness, power, glory, splendour, and fortune, Hadji Ibraham Khan, on being granted leave, and vested with authority from the principal post of the high king, whose court is like that of Solyman, the asylum of the world, the sign of the power of God, the jewel in the King of Kings, the ornament in the cheek of eternal empire, the grace of the beauty of sovereignty and royalty, the king of the universe, like Caherman, the mansion of mercy and justice, the Phœnix of good fortune, the eminence of never-fading prosperity, the King, powerful as Alexander, who has no equal among the princes exalted to majesty by the heavens in the globe, or shade from the shade of the Most High, a Khoosroo, whose saddle is the moon, and whose stirrup is the new moon, a prince of great rank, before whom the sun is concealed."

(Then follow the Arabic verses, or compliments to the envoy.)

"Thy benevolence is universally dispersed, every where drops are scattered, thy kindness shadows cities, may God fix firm the basis of thy dominion, and may God fix and extend thy power over the servants of the Almighty; and high in

station and dignity, the great and able in power, the adorner of those acquainted with manners, Captain John Malcolm, delegated from the sublime quarter of the high in power, seated on a throne, the asylum of the world, the chief jewel in the crown of royalty and sovereignty, the anchor of the vessel of victory and fortune, the ship on the sea of glory and empire, the blazing sun in the sky of greatness and glory, lords of the countries of England and India, may God strengthen his territories, and establish his glory and commands upon the seas! in the manner explained in his credentials, which are sealed with the seal of the most powerful and the most glorious, possessing fortune, the origin of rank, splendour, and nobility, the ornament of the world, the accomplisher of the works of mankind, the Governor-General of India.

"The treaty between these two great states shall be binding on race after race, while the world exists, and act in conformity to what is now settled.

"Article I. As long as the sun, illuminating the circle of the two great contracting parties, shines on their sovereign dominions, and bestows light on the whole world, the beautiful image of excellent union shall remain fixed on the mirror of duration and perpetuity, the thread of shameful enmity and distance shall be cut, conditions of mutual aid and assistance between the two states shall be instituted, and all causes of hatred and hostility shall be banished." (Then follow four other articles, the treaty being bound by the following conclusion):—"While time endures, and while the world exists, the contents of this exalted treaty shall remain an admired picture in the mirror of duration and perpetuity, and submission to the fair image on this conspicuous page shall be everlasting."

Firmaun relative to the Mines in Persia, from the Shah to his Son, Abbas Meerza.

In the year of the Hegira, 1245. (A.D. 1830).

" The royal and auspicious command of his Majesty was issued (to wit) that the keys of the gates of prosperity, and the brilliancy of the soul of royalty—the accomplished and distinguished son—the deputy of this everlasting sovereignty, Abbas Meerza, may he be blessed and happy. And be it known to him, that according to what has been represented to our illustrious presence, that incomparable son has granted to the sagacious, faithful, and highly distinguished servant, his Excellency ———, the important affairs of the mines of Azerbijan, and has committed the execution of that important service to the charge of the endeavours of the above-mentioned distinguished gentleman ; and since the manners of the sagacity, and the intellectual power of the above-mentioned gentleman has become manifest to the presence of his Majesty. We have from the beginning of the year 1244, and the time to come, granted the execution of that important affair to the above-mentioned gentleman, that according as it suits that distinguished gentleman's natural talent, he may employ his skill and services towards that concern, he may bring the well-informed miners from whatever country he may find out, and employ according to his own management and sagacity; so that he may prove the manifestation of his services in procuring the fruits of the mines. And we further command, that that son, according to what he had agreed, will confine the execution of that important science to the above-mentioned gentleman, and all the necessary helps on your part should be stored upon him, and to establish him in his im-

portant service, and heal him with your royal favour. We further command that their Excellencies, the distinguished nobles of the Court of Exchequer, and the Ministers of the supreme Court of Royalty should preserve copy of this royal Firmaun in their respective registers, and preserve them from any alteration or forgery."

(Sealed with his Majesty's imperial seal, and registered and sealed by the grand Vizier and twelve other Ministers of State).

Firmaun from Abbas Meerza, relative to the Mines.

"The royal command is issued, viz., that the object of our illustrious mind is this—that the mines which are in the country of Azerbijan, as far as are under our dominion, should not remain useless nor unproductive—nay, they should be useful and profitable; and as his Excellency ———, &c. &c., on whose learning and the high degree of his service we have great confidence, and are sensible of. He in the auspicious presence of his Royal Highness, requested that he should be appointed to execute this important service, and have committed to his charge the mines of the above-mentioned countries. We have granted for the space of twenty-one years, that he may procure miners from England whensoever he should approve them to be learned and distinguished in this art, to open the mines; and by the help of God, they should employ all their endeavours and efforts, that this important affair should be terminated with success, and so may be the means of the increase of the royal favour towards him," &c.

(The grant was confirmed by the eldest son of the Crown Prince of Persia).

Firmaun from Mahmoud Meerza, the present Shah of Persia (Son of Abbas Meerza).

"This royal order denotes, that since the powerful and penetrating command of his Royal Highness the superior and my Lord of Bounty, the mighty deputy of sovereignty to whom my life is devoted, has established the honour of working the mines," &c. &c. (recapitulating as before).

"We, therefore, obediently to the royal commands, according to its contents, it having been commanded and ordered to us, who are the most obedient of servants, that we should also pass and order agreeably to the royal command. We, therefore, obediently to the royal commands of his Royal Highness (our father), in the manner that that royal order has passed, from the beginning of the present year until the time above mentioned, have granted that important affair to the above mentioned distinguished gentleman, in order that without interruption or interference of any one, he should work the above mentioned mines. We further command that the great marshals and the superior nobles, the governors of the different districts of Azerbijan, shall obey this command, and consider all the requisites and necessaries therein confined exclusively to him; their excellencies the secretaries of the blessed state should register and preserve the contents of the royal firmaun, and having preserved it from the guile of any alterations, and obey it necessarily."

Firmaun from Abbas Meerza accrediting the before-mentioned "distinguished Gentleman" to the Government of the Sublime Porte.

(After various salutations.) "We represent that in conformity to the friendship and unanimity which exists between the two sublime powers, the constant desire of our heart is

that we may make inquiries respecting the true state of your Majesty's health in a becoming manner, and evince in an appropriate way the degree of friendship which exists in our heart towards your Majesty.

"Wherefore at this time, when the Alijah (the illustrious), the ornament of Christian nobles, ———, being about to proceed to that country (Turkey), we have written this epistle, expressing our sincerity.

"The afore-mentioned Alijah, one of our agents, is on his way to England, by Constantinople, for the accomplishment of some affairs, and intends to return after awhile; it is therefore requested from your Majesty, that during the stay of the said Alijah in Constantinople, and before his departure for England, whatever he may require with regard to the affairs of the sublime power of Persia, and shall make known the same to your Majesty according to the friendship existing between the two sublime powers, you will be pleased to take notice of them, so that, if it please God, by the assistance and attention of your Majesty, the affairs that are committed to him may be accomplished."

Reply from the Kaimacan Pasha to Abbas Meerza.

(After the customary titles.) "We have received through the channel of the most excellent amongst the noblest of Christians, ———, who is on his way to the British government on the part of the illustrious government of Persia, the letter which your Royal Highness has addressed to his Highness the Supreme Vizier, to request that a favourable reception be given to the demands of the above-mentioned Khan relative to your affairs; we have perfectly understood the meaning thereof.

"The Sublime Porte of everlasting duration have always had at heart to receive favourably and agreeably to treaties all subjects and agents of the kind belonging to the illustrious government of Persia, bound in sincere friendship with the Sublime Porte.

"It is for this reason, and in consequence of the above-mentioned Khan having made known to us that he is going to proceed to England, agreeable to the instructions given to him, that we seize of the circumstance to address the present friendly letter to your Royal Highness." (Many compliments follow.)

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The Persians consider Ali to have been the handsomest man that was ever created, and they say that the blessed in heaven account it their chiefest felicity to be beloved by him. In the mosque at Koom, in which he was interred with the fair Fatima, the daughter of Mahomet, is inscribed six songs, in golden characters, from which I select the following:—

"O inexpressible man! who hast no equal but Mahomet, the select Prophet, what is the light of the sun compared to thy understanding! destiny does but execute thy commands; the sun is enlightened by the beams of thy knowledge. If thy glory be weighed in the balance of exalted sense, the highest mountains weighed against it would appear no more than the seed of lentils; the sun is made a crown of glory of the shadow of thy umbrella. O! divine and sacred host, nature is only adorned and enriched by thee—had not thy perfect being been in the idea of the Creator, Eve had been eternally a virgin and Adam a bachelor. The angel Gabriel every day

kisses the ground-sill of thy gate, as being the only way that leads to the throne of Mahomet. Minister especially elected of God for the master of the faithful! Thou art the son of the Prophet of God. The sparkling rubies cover themselves with the earth in the hollow of the mines, ashamed of their not being bright enough to be put into thy treasure. The universal spirit, with its sublime knowledge, cannot arrive at the portals of thy gate, O master of the faithful! Were there a place more exalted than the most high throne of God, I would affirm it to be thy place, O master of the faithful! That we may give thee praises worthy of thyself it behoves us to depict thy wonderful essence; for that reason alone it is impossible to praise thee according to thy merit, O master of the faithful! We be all poor beggars at the gate of thy beneficence, and the kings of the world are in the number of those beggars, O master of the faithful! The price of thy favours surpasses human understanding. The weight of thy majesty and of thy glory is too heavy for the shoulders of human understanding. Being of inconceivable puissance, the commands of Providence are executed by thy orders. Thou canst turn with thy hands alone the vast celestial sphere. The sun, under whose shadow and auspicious omens nature rolls, is but a glittering beam of the clasp of thy girdle. The superior of the college of creation, Gabriel, and all his art and knowledge, is but a mere scholar to thee. The verses of the Alcoran, which assure men of the mercy and favour of God, were sent from heaven for thy sake, O destroyer of heresy! Thou art the secretary of the commandments of divine inspiration; the judge of things commanded or forbidden. If the idea of thee, the most noble of divine essence, were not in the world, the world would be but an imperfect and

senseless figure. Supreme majesty, who hast augmented the lustre of the supreme throne, all creatures necessarily praise thy name. The sun is less than an atom in the heaven of assemblies where thou art honoured, and the atoms are greater than the sun upon those places of the earth where thou hast wrought by miracles. The glory of Solomon, who was the glory of the earth, was a small thing in comparison of thee. It is a sin to compare thee with a man; for how can a poor lamp of the earth pretend to compare with a diamond of the clearest water. Human wit cannot find a man equal to thee, but by turning towards Mahomet. This is our firm and clear faith, and I can say no more."

Of the Angels.

Of the angels the Persians have strange ideas, some of which I copy from the Musselmans' catechism:—"We believe with the heart, and confess with the mouth, that the most high God has servants or ministers, to whom is given the name of angels, who are perfectly free from all sin, who assist continually before God, who punctually execute his commands, and never disobey him. Respecting their nature, we are required to believe that their bodies are subtle, pure, and formed of light; that they neither eat, drink, nor sleep; that they have no sensual properties, nor carnal appetites, and are without father or mother. Some stand erect; others maintain inclined postures; others are seated, and with the forehead bowed down, and adore the Creator. Some chaunt his praise, and sing hymns to his glory; others laud and magnify him after another manner; and others intercede with him for the pardon of

human sins. There are those among them who record our actions in the registry; there are others who protect us; others surround, and others still bear the throne of God, or they are employed in duties agreeable to the Deity."

Of the Astrologers.

The Persians highly respect the astrologers, who consult the planets, of which they speak in the following extravagant terms:—"Praise be to that great Creator that formed heaven and earth, and the heavenly bodies, amongst whose divine works mankind appear but a small spot. The dark Saturn, like a sentinel, in the seventh heaven, is attentive to his interests; the glorious Jupiter, like an able judge, enthroned in the sixth heaven, is watchful of his desires; and the bloody Mars, with his stained sabre, sits in the fifth heaven, the ready executioner of his Maker's wrathful commands; and the resplendent Sun, encircled by a flaming crown, shines in the fourth heaven with light that he has received from the Almighty; the beautiful Venus, like a glad minstrel, sits in her elegant apartment in the third heaven, supported by His power; the feathered Mercury, like a wise secretary, sits in the second heaven, the writer of the Almighty's orders; the clear Moon sits enthroned in the first heaven, a sign of the Creator's power."

Of Soofeism, or Infidelity in Persia.

Many of the Persians have no belief whatever in the doctrines of the Koran. Soofeism, or infidelity, prevails a good deal amongst them, of which the following is their belief:—"That the souls of men differ infinitely in degree, but not a all in kind, from the divine spirit of which they are particles, and in which they will be ultimately absorbed; that the spiri. of God pervades the universe almost immediately present to his work, and, consequently, always in substance; that He alone is perfect benevolence, perfect truth, perfect beauty; that the love of Him alone is real and generous love, whil that of all other objects is absurd and illusory; that th beauties of nature are faint resemblances, like images in mirror, of the divine charms; that from eternity witho beginning to eternity without end, the Supreme Benevolen is occupied in bestowing happiness, or the means of attainir it; that men can only attain it by performing the part of th primal covenant between them and their Creator; that nothing has a pure absolute existence but mind or spirit; that material substances—as the ignorant call them—are no more than gay pictures, presented continually to our minds by the sempiternal artist; that we must beware of attachment to s . h phantoms, and attach ourselves exclusively to God, who truly exists in us, as we exist solely in Him; that we retain ever in this forlorn state of separation from our beloved the idea of heavenly beauty, and the remembrance of our primeval vows; that sweet music, gentle breezes, fragrant flowers, perpetual renew the primary idea, refresh our fading memory, and melt us with tender affection; and by abstracting our souls from vanity, that is, from all but God, approximate to his essence

in our final union, with which will consist our supreme beatitude."

The Vedenta creed says, "That, excepting the Deity, nothing exists, the universe being only an appearance without any reality; just as a man in a dream sees imaginary objects, and in that state experiences ideal pleasure and pain; so that life is nothing but a dream, there being only one resplendent light, which assumes different appearances."

It is an extraordinary fact of the Mahomedans, that the Turks are imbued with a strong traditional belief that they shall be driven out of Europe; and the good Moslem orders his bones to be interred on the Asiatic side of Constantinople, that they may not be disturbed by the invaders. Of the Persians, also, it is said by modern travellers, that in the south it is a common enquiry amongst them, "When are the English coming to take possession of Persia?" Evidently there is a shaking amongst the dry bones!

THE END.

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